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CENTENARY THOUGHTS
FOR THE
PEW AND PULPIT.

BISHOP FOSTER.

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CENTENARY THOUGHTS

FOR THE

PEW AND PULPIT OF METHODISM,

IN

EIGHTEEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-FOUR.

BY
Randolph Sinks
R. S. FOSTER, Bp., 1820–1903.
ONE OF THE BISHOPS OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

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PREFACE.

In 1866 I was invited to preach a Centennial Sermon before the New York Conference. After its delivery the Conference, by a unanimous vote, solicited its publication. But, being asked to repeat it several times, I withheld its publication until the time passed. The first part of this little volume is the substance of that sermon, with some additions. The second and third parts are the substance of addresses delivered to the several Conferences I held in September and October of 1883, and to the Lay Electoral Conferences meeting at the same time. These were also solicited for publication by the several bodies to whom they were addressed. I have thought that perhaps I ought not to disregard the request, and, on re-examination, have come to feel that possibly at this particular time the words, while not in any respect remarkable, might do some good beyond the circle of those who heard them. This, if any is necessary, is my apology for sending forth this little *brochure*. My brethren of the ministry, who well know the heart from which it emanates, will not find fault with the liberty taken in addressing them thus more publicly, or with the great plainness of speech used, as the publication is made in response to the request of several hundreds of themselves. I indulge the hope that the reading will be profitable, possibly, long

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after the tongue which first uttered the words has been silenced by death, and far beyond the circle of those who heard them.

My lay brethren, also, I believe, will not think me immodest in addressing them in this manner, nor will they be offended with the suggestions and advices offered. Many, I am quite sure, will be pleased to have in a permanent form the words which met with their approval at the time of their delivery. I send forth this triple message with unaffected humility, and with the earnest prayer that the good God will make it a blessing to our dear Methodism.

R. S. Foster.

INTRODUCTION.

The title of this book, while in itself somewhat blind, sufficiently indicates to the Methodist fraternity its general character and intent. We have come to the closing hours of the first hundred years of our denominational history. Naturally enough the occasion becomes one of special interest to Methodist peoples throughout the world. Crises points, epochal periods, inevitably start emotion and reflection. In the brief life of a man a year is significant, and the anniversary becomes a pivotal point. Great organic movements of society, civic or religious, which carry over ages, and along the lines of generations, fix their commemorative periods by centuries. Nature counts her epochal points by millenniads.

This year is our centennial. Episcopal Methodism, the largest division of the Methodist family, closes its first hundred years. Other American branches have a certain relation of kinship to it. The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, which dates its origin as such from 1845, when it became a separate branch with co-ordinate claims to be of the same root with ourselves, will observe this year in common with us, as its proper centennial epoch. We cordially welcome them to the fellowship of our rejoicing as brothers beloved, and joint heirs with us to all the hereditaments of our common honorable origin. Other branches, originating at different periods and from divers causes, will also join with us; and, for the time being, overlooking grounds of separation and points of difference, while recounting the

family history with pride and love, will revive the ancient bond of affection and brotherly sympathy.

What a year it might have been if, forgetting the causes which severed us, and the slight differences which keep us asunder, this centenary year might have been made memorable among all Christian people as the period of a reunion which should last forever, honorable to our family name, and promotive of welfare over all the estate of Christendom!

Churches do not divide without cause, and perhaps never without what, at the time, seems adequate cause, from the stand-point of a religious conscience. Doubtless the real root cause is often mere human weakness, if not something even worse than that. Alas! it is found to be easier to divide than to heal the wound which the wrenched limb carries and which the marred trunk feels, and so both the suffering parts must go on suffering to the end. Methodism would be a more beautiful and shapely tree, and great, like one of the Nevada monarchs, if all the branches could adorn a single trunk; but since it cannot be, we must comfort ourselves with the thought that possibly somehow it is best as it is. We confess to a personal regret at giving up the hope of reunion in our time, or, for all that we can see, at any time. For ourselves we have neither bitter recollections nor unbrotherly feelings, but an open hand and a loving heart for all who bear the family name. The roof-tree is broad enough for us all, while we gather beneath its generous boughs for a year of honest congratulations and sincere God-speeds. So we will, and our Christian neighbors will, wave us friendly signals of sympathetic joy and benediction.

THE FIRST HUNDRED YEARS

OF

EPISCOPAL METHODISM.

And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought: but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God.

—Acts v, 38, 39.

CENTENARY THOUGHTS.

THE FIRST HUNDRED YEARS OF EPISCOPAL METHODISM.

An intelligent survey of the past of human history reveals, in dim and uncertain outline, beginning with the utmost range of vision, an ever-progressive movement of the race toward something better—some indefinite good, which, amid all failure and disappointment, has continued to lure it on. Failing to reach the goal, it has still pressed toward it, and, undaunted to-day, it yet has its eye steadily fixed on the future, and with unabated zeal and hope continues the advance. The movement has been, for long intervals, painfully slow and tortuous; now perceptibly advancing, now deflecting, now receding, but with occasional leaps of marked and rapid progress. It is not possible, in a brief view of the lapse of thousands of years, to obtain an exact chart, or determine the precise causes of the eddies, doldrums, or sudden and swift rush of the tides here and yonder. Obscurity rests thick and dark over the middle and remote rims of the retrospect; but one thing is perfectly clear, that in all those ages, near and remote, there has been a continuous play of great human and divine forces, and, though with intermittent energy and often blind endeavor, there has been some continuous progress. The generations have come and gone, each increasing in volume, each pushing and pulling at the great problem, and each failing of the solution, but each adding something. Underneath that thick covering of oblivion lie millions of

millions of unmarked graves: nations whose names even have perished—armies whose victories and defeats have no historians—workers who have toiled and left no sign—students and prophets who died with half-discerned truths and unfinished investigations: the wave has rolled over them all, but they did not live in vain. They, building or tearing down, were, in one way or another, pushing the race upward toward the dawn.

We come to-day to speak of one of those mighty movements which, breaking out suddenly, as a spring bursting from the desert, made and is making deep and lasting impression on the face of human society, and in some respects changing the course of the ages, as but two other moral cataclysms have done within recorded time. There have been great political upheavals, great social revolutions, great changes in the physical condition of peoples, great struggles in which nations have been born and perished, great nascent epochs in which new forms of civilization have been evolved, but there have been but two or three great moral movements —*epochal periods* within the records of history. The retrospect presents a scene of scarcely intermitted activity—peoples rushing to and fro over the earth's surface, building cities, founding kingdoms, carrying on conquests, but making but little perceptible moral advance. The attrition developed genius—there were mental epochs; but mainly the movement has been that of furious beasts aspiring after dominion—mass hurling itself against mass for conquest and spoils. Every page of history is marked with blood and fire and destruction. If the slaughtered millions could suddenly return to life they would double the present population of the globe; if the cities and hamlets burned could appear at once in flames the world would be in conflagration;

the marching of armies and the shock of battles, if they could all be restored and set in array, would shake the globe. A furious beast roaring after prey has man been to his fellow-man. The retrospect is frightful, and yet from the beginning there has been the hope of something better, and a misguided endeavor after it. Prophets appear here and there, and moral reformers—Pagan, Jewish, Christian—who sought to turn the minds of men to righteousness; but only two or three have left their individual impress permanent, wide, and deep on the ages—pre-eminently, Paul, Luther, Calvin, Wesley.

A century and nearly a half has now elapsed since Wesley appeared as a reformer. In 1739 * his work commenced in one of the cloisters of Oxford. Why, then, it may be asked, do we celebrate this as the centennial anniversary of Methodism? We do not. In 1766 Methodism was started in America, ten years before our national birth. It had already existed in England for nearly thirty years.

We celebrate to-day the centennial of our own Church life as a distinct ecclesiastical organization. Up to 1784 we had no proper Church status, though Methodism had existed for eighteen years, and had become extensively known, and a power in America. The same convulsion which made us a nation made us a Church. It would consume time which I need for another object were I to recite history presumably familiar to all my hearers, and, if not, which you can find in the histories which are in your reach, and which at this particular time every Methodist should possess and reread. †

* Note A.

† Let every Methodist family put in its book-case Stevens's "History of Methodism."

For the same reason I shall not make further mention of the name of Mr. Wesley than simply to recognize him as that wonderful man who, under God, was the founder of Methodism, and the fountain-head of that great spiritual quickening of which it is a small part of the concrete expression. For an account of his life and character, his immense labors, his apostolic zeal, his transcendent organizing power and administrative wisdom and energy, his marvelous literary labor, and all the great qualities which cluster in his character as an evangelist and religious reformer, I must refer you to the historians. The tardy justice denied him during his life is now amply done him by the entire Christian world, and he is awarded his proper place, as, if not *primus inter pares*, at least equal to any of the great names that have adorned Christian history. Not understood by his times, he has come to be comprehended by posterity. But it is of Methodism, not Mr. Wesley, that we speak—the magnificent monument his sanctified genius reared, not himself. Institutions are more, after all, than the men that rear them. Christianity is more than Paul; Methodism is more and greater than Wesley.

For the same reason that we omit any special reference to Mr. Wesley, we do not mention the labors of Mr. Asbury, or any of the prominent men from his day to ours, some of whom deserve to rank with the greatest heroes. Read the story, as you will find it in the charming pages of Dr. Abel Stevens's "History of Methodism." Written in a style of rare elegance, it reads like a romance, with the advantage of being history.

For the same reason still, I make no mention of the persecutions our fathers were called to suffer, or the fierce and bitter opposition they encountered in all parts of the land

from the dominant clergy and the Churches already preoccupying the ground. Those days are past, and we can well afford to forget them, albeit, while they lasted, they were bitter enough to try men's souls.

Per saltum, clearing all intervening and irrelevant matters, however interesting, we come at once to our theme—*the Philosophy of Methodism*, or a view of what it has accomplished and the explanation.

The treatment we propose will bring under review the following points, and in the order named: the present status of Methodism; the causes of its marvelous development; its further work; its wants; its prospects; its claim to the good-will of other Christian bodies, and to the continued support and loyalty of its own sons and daughters.

Each Christian Church has a life of its own, and interests and demands peculiar to itself, which make it right, without laying itself open to the charge of narrowness, that at stated periods or some marked epoch it should recount its family history and traditions, and renew its loyalty and allegiance, and devise measures of love and gratitude for its greater expansion and enlarged usefulness. Nor should such celebrations give offense to other members of the great one household, but should be rather an occasion of kindly feeling and fraternal expression, for what is the weal of one is the weal of all, and the joy of one should be the common joy of the whole brotherhood of Christians. While during this centennial year we shall think and talk more about ourselves than would seem modest under ordinary circumstances, and busy ourselves more than usual about our own affairs, our sister Churches will rather commend than condemn us, and I believe that any enthusiasm we may enkindle for the greater success of our own cause will but sweeten and strengthen

the bond of sympathy. So let us have a first centennial celebration worthy of our name and history, and let all our Christian relations rejoice with us.

Returning to the line of discussion we have named, we come to consider, as our first point, the present status of Methodism, or, more widely yet, what has been wrought by Methodism up to date—the grand result of the century's forth-putting.

The statement, to be complete, would require us to include the results in both hemispheres—the Methodism of the Old World and of the New in all their branches, for they are all the growth of the same seed; more yet, to be perfectly complete, it would be requisite to give an accurate estimate of its influence on other Churches and moral agencies existing when it appeared, as well as on such as have arisen outside of itself by means of it: to trace its quickening and molding power on the experience and life and thought and the theology and evangelizing spirit and methods of the whole Christian commonwealth; its transforming influence over the pulpit, the press, and the altar of evangelical and unevangelical Christendom; together with its impression on the secular and civic institutions and economics of the civilized world. That it has been a powerful agency in all these directions for the last hundred years no one can dispute. If it were possible to adequately separate and estimate these external effects, it might appear that by far the greatest work Methodism has wrought has been in lines wholly outside of its own pale—the indirect greater than the direct results. For myself I have no doubt upon that point. If, as a distinct organization, it should now at once disappear or become absorbed, these influences, which have permanently incorporated themselves into the civil and religious

consciousness of the race and structure of society, would make it still, though undiscerned, one of the most tremendous factors in the world's life.

It has been a characteristic of Methodism that, though a pronounced, it has never been a destructive, agency, but, on the contrary, conservative and constructive. Much as it was opposed in its early history by the older Churches, it was invariably helpful to them. The fires that had gone out on many of their altars were kindled afresh from hers. Shaking off their grave-clothes, they came forth into new life under the inspiration of her teaching and example. Churches that had lost all signs of spiritual power, thus quickened, have come to be full of evangelizing energy and power. Reinvested, in part consciously, but whether consciously or not, by her contact and influence, they to-day rival, and in some cases surpass, her zeal. Adopting her methods, and working them with even greater vigor, they have come to equal or even distance her in revivalistic and soul-saving work. That this new awakening of an almost dormant energy is a product of her enthusiasm is now cordially and gratefully acknowledged by the Churches themselves. Though Methodism has steadily and zealously labored to build up a great church-power, and has sometimes been put on the defensive, it has always rejoiced in the prosperity of other religious bodies, and it is now her joy that she is not alone in zeal and aggressiveness, that others are even threatening to take her laurels.

But passing by these indirect results at home and in the mission fields, and confining our statement to what has grown upon the sheer root and stem of Methodism itself, the showing will be wonderful enough. These discriminated and organized results are what we shall proceed to

state. Still further, we must limit ourselves to the visible fruits existing in the organism to-day. Justice would require that some mention should be made of the garnered fruits—the three generations of glorified trophies—the millions born to a celestial life at her altars, who, after witnessing upon earth, have been translated to the skies. There is reason to believe that that branch of Methodism greatly exceeds this. She has a larger family in heaven than on earth, and these belong to her, and will forever be numbered as her children; in any statement of the work she has done their salvation must be included as a chief element. If she should be blotted out from the earth to-day she would still exist forever in heaven, and her praises would continue to be sung by many millions of her happy children through all eternity, for, though these earthly badges of separation are unknown as such among the glorified, yet there are none among them who will ever forget their earthly name or the holy altars where their heavenly life was enkindled. Methodism is a word that will have a charmed sound, and will be reverently spoken long after the earth itself has been burned up.

But reserving for our present statement simply what now exists, we shall find enough to endanger that humility without which we are nothing. After a brief general statement of Methodism as a whole, including all branches in all parts of the world, we must still further limit ourselves to our own branch and its offshoots, whose anniversary we celebrate.

Commencing amid the retreats of Oxford, in one of the college cloisters, in the earnest aspirations after personal holiness enkindled in the breasts of the two Wesleys, Whitefield, and one or two other students, Methodism soon took

feet and went abroad into the great vulgar world to the people. Though college born, it was not college bound. By an instinct which has continued throughout its history, and in all its forms, it betook itself to the masses. Drifting hither and thither, with no one to care for their souls, their neglected condition awakened the sympathy of these young evangelists and opened the door for their first labors. A strange success began immediately to attend them. The movement assumed form and consistency, and widened and deepened beyond all expectation. They did not know what a power was born among men, what proportions it was soon to assume! By rapid and startling evolutions it surprised neighboring towns and cities and remote mining districts. Reticent at first and timid, it soon became bold and aggressive. Its words and methods at once aroused attention and opposition. In a brief time it multiplied and organized its agents, and with almost incredible quickness extended itself throughout the isles of Britain, striking its roots deeply in the rich soils of England, the fens and bogs of Ireland, the gardens and glades of Wales, even gaining a hold in the rocky fastnesses of Scotland. Before the generation passed away, throughout Britain, alongside of the Anglican pile, the Scotch kirk, and the Romish cathedral, arose the unpretending Wesleyan chapel, and the United Kingdom was alive with the multitudes of the new sect.

The islands were too small. Overflowing their narrow boundaries, Methodism spread abroad into other countries, taking fast hold of distant provinces and far-off lands of the globe. Almost as by miracle, it was soon planted in France, Germany, India, Australia, and within the century in Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Italy, and in the eastern and western isles of the sea, finding its largest home, where it was to win

its greatest victories and rear its proudest monument, in the colonies and new States of the New World.

So rapid and wonderful had been the diffusion of its agency that in less than a hundred years it had girdled the globe, and become one of the most compact, numerous, and powerful sects that has existed in the world. To-day it may be truthfully said of it, as of the empire that gave it birth, that the sun never sets upon its dominions. It has taken root in all the lands, and won converts from among all the peoples of the earth.

But we have to do at present more especially with its great American branch. The Wesleyan body is a great and powerful factor in the British kingdom, and in all parts of the empire, but American Methodism has outgrown the parent stock.* It is not strange that it should be so. Here it found a larger and less preoccupied field. The peculiar condition of our new and rapidly growing country furnished a theater to which its methods and spirit were exactly adapted. It is questionable whether other and older organisms already existing, with their slow and cumbrous methods, could have preserved our long and shifting frontier from lapsing into semi-barbarism. Methodism appeared at precisely the right moment, and, with its peculiar experience and evangelizing methods and theology, furnished the needed and perfectly-adapted instrument. The tabernacle for the wilderness was not more timely. The hand of God was never more plainly discernible.

It is a little more than a hundred years since a stray seed, borne across the sea, drifted through the gates of New York Bay, and lodged on the metamorphic rock of Manhattan Island. It was not a thrifty seed: most of its life had been

* Stevens's "History," vol. i, p. 23.

washed out by the waves which bore it from a distant shore. Five years it had lain above ground, until it seemed hopelessly dead. Who could have guessed the fecundity of that seed?

An acorn from the freighted boughs of some great oak goes rattling along the rocks and rifts until finally it hides itself amid the decaying *débris* of former vegetation; a squirrel or idle breeze toying among the branches shook it down, or of very ripeness it fell. A hundred years pass and the acorn is an oak, in turn propagating forests like itself. It is so in the moral realm. A seed-truth, shaken from invisible wings, drifting about in mid-heaven, lodges ultimately in some great human consciousness; a century hence it shall be a bread-bearing tree for the nations.

That seed of Methodism, how it has shot its roots downward in the American soil! how, full of vitality, they have run into the rich earth, hurrying, with greed of life, along the shores of the rivers, out into the fat valleys, over the wide savannas, across the mountains and stretches of the wilderness, from eastern to western shores of ocean, until the whole land has become full of the matted roots and shapely branches! The seed has grown, not a tree but a forest—a banyan-tree, with a thousand trunks and million branches, embowering the continent, its top filling half the sky, and its shade covering the land from the snows of Hudson's Bay to the coral coasts of Florida, and from sea to sea! By what method shall I best convey an idea of this wonderful growth?

Just for a moment let us look at statistics. They do not convey the whole truth, and yet they will help us. Geographically, American Methodism, in some form, is represented in all quarters of the globe—Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Americas, and is found in nearly all the nationalities of the earth — in Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Germany,

Italy, Bulgaria, India, China, Japan, Liberia, the Argentine Republic, Chili, Bolivia, Mexico, and in all the provinces, states, and territories of North America. Her missionaries and native preachers are evangelizing in all the principal languages and dialects of the race: their voices are heard in the jungles of Africa, amid the snow-drifts of the Mountains of the Moon, and almost wherever man is found.

For convenience we present the figures of her numerical strength, as to communicants, ministers, members, and chapels:

	Members.	Ministers.	Chapels.
Methodist Episcopal Church.....	1,800,000	12,096	28,000
Methodist Episcopal Church, South	900,000	4,000	for all
American Meth. Episcopal Church.	387,000	1,800	Meth-
Zion Methodist Episcopal Church..	300,000	1,800	odism.
Protestant Methodist Church.....	135,000	1,400	
True Wesleyans	17,000	400	
Other branches.....	155,000	1,200	
Canadian branches and provinces..	690,000	1,600	
Total	4,384,000	24,296	

It will aid to a fair estimate of this result if for a moment we look at a comparison with similar results during the same period. In 1776 it appears that there were existing in the United States:

	Churches.	Ministers.	Prob. Members.
Congregational.....	700	575	70,000
Protestant Episcopal..	300	250	10,000
Baptist	380	350	80,000
Presbyterian	140	300	30,000
Lutheran	60	25	8,000
Dutch Reformed	60	25	7,000
German Reformed	60	25	6,000
Associate Reformed	20	13	2,000
Moravian	8	12	1,000
Methodist.....	34	24	4,900 *

* In note B will be found further statistics.

This, so far as is known, was the religious status of the colonies in 1776. The overshadowing bodies were, Congregationalists first, Baptists second, Presbyterians third, Protestant Episcopalians fourth.

The present status in the United States of the same bodies is:

	Churches.	Ministers.	Members.
Methodist	39,000	23,000	3,900,000
Baptist	29,000	18,000	2,500,000
Presbyterian	11,500	8,600	940,000
Congregational	3,800	3,700	384,000
Protestant Episcopal	3,000	3,400	350,000
Lutheran	5,500	3,200	950,000
All other	16,000	9,000	1,000,000

Thus it appears that Methodism in one hundred years has passed from nearly the least to one and a half times the size of the then largest body, to four times that of the next largest, to nine times the next largest, to ten times the next largest, and to more than one third of the whole.

While giving statistics, it may be as well to add some with respect to material development, especially with relation to church accommodation, educational appliances, periodical and other publications — what might be called in general, church equipment. These are integral to church development. Provisions for converts, for their housing and training, are as much a part of a church's life and work as conversions are. One hundred years ago Methodism had essentially no church buildings of any kind—thirty all told. She now has not less than 30,000. She had no educational establishments: she now has 52 colleges, valued at $11,050,000, to say nothing of her 100 seminaries of learning for higher education of youth, which would add some millions to the estimate. The Baptists have 46 colleges, val-

ued at $10,300,000. The Congregationalists have 28, valued at $9,000,000. The Protestant Episcopalians have 12, valued at $8,700,000; Presbyterians, 41, valued at $7,000,000; Lutherans, 17, valued at $1,400,000; Cumberland Presbyterians, 4, valued at $1,300,000. Thus it appears that our denominational educational equipment places us again at the head. The same fact holds as to the number of students in regular attendance on schools of higher learning. Receipts from all sources of publication arrangements from the beginning: Methodist Book Concern, $35,000,000; American Bible Society, $20,000,000; American Tract Society, New York, $18,000,000; Baptist Publishing Board, $6,400,000; American Sunday-School Union, $9,200,000; Presbyterian, New and Old School, $5,300,000; Congregational Board, $3,100,000. Thus it appears that we have provided more fully religious publications than any of our sister Churches. The showing would make it further appear, if we had the time, that we publish a larger number of periodicals—weekly and monthly—and circulate them more widely than any other denomination. The same will hold good of moneys expended in mission work, but not per member; here the comparison is against us. These statistics are presented not in a boastful spirit, nor as matter of self-glorification, but simply to show what Methodism has done in a hundred years, and, by comparison, to enable us to form a proper estimate of her work. If it is not all that ought to be, still it is not despicable, nor such as to cause us to hang our heads with shame in the presence of our brethren.

To enable us to estimate the value of these figures we must take time to weigh them, and in some way cause the mind to see what they represent. Let us analyze the statement and cause it to pass before us spectacularly. This will

aid the imagination. The picture must be in two parts: the first represents one hundred and eighteen years ago; the second represents to-day, and shows what has been accomplished. Exert the imagination. You perceive a picture moving into view. Over the first scene you observe in large, bold numerals MDCCLXVI, (1766.) In the foreground there are two conspicuous figures; sitting around a table in shadow is a company of men, rough-looking and poorly clad. The two conspicuous figures are a male and female. They are also plainly dressed, and are unmistakably of the laboring class. The woman has a hand lifted in an admonitory gesture, and her face is aglow with earnestness. The listener is evidently cowering under rebuke. You are familiar with the picture, and at once recognize the two as *Philip Embury* and *Barbara Heck*. In those two breasts is all there is of Methodism in America in 1766—they are Methodism sole and complete. Fix this distinctly in the mind: *Philip Embury, Barbara Heck—the people called Methodists*. In all the colonies there is not another, and of these one is backslidden. There has not been a prayer or class meeting or sermon. There is no church or place of meeting. There are no plans for propagation of any kind. Will it die? It would seem so.

The first part moves out of view, and now you perceive the second part coming into view. You see that it is to-day by the bold figures 1884. A hundred and more years have intervened. The picture represents nothing of that important interval. Three intervening generations have come and gone. It is an eventful period. Revolutions have rocked the hemisphere. The greatest of the ages has heaved and tossed throughout that century of years. Heroes in Church and State have lived and acted. Great changes have been

wrought. The wilderness has become a garden. Mighty States have taken the place of feeble colonies. The great republic has become the wonder and admiration of the world. Cities of vast commerce have sprung up over the land, and along the shores of two oceans. The great war of the Revolution has been fought, then another following this, the greater war of the Rebellion. Fifty millions of freemen have spread over a domain then covered with savages and wild beasts. The world has advanced! It is a new age. Again the picture moves:—you observe what seems to be a procession. It is a procession of the descendants of Barbara Heck. First, they come in pairs, marching two abreast. They who first appear are venerable-looking men, some black, some white. They have an air of thoughtfulness, and are simple in mien and dress. There are about thirty of them. They are evidently a guild. Some of them you recognize. They are the Bishops of Episcopal Methodism. The line now moving into view comes five abreast. You observe, they bear parchments. They are of many nationalities, English, German, Italian, Dane, Swede, Norwegian, Chinese, Japanese, Hindu, Mahratti, Bengalese, Spanish, and almost all known dialects: more than twenty thousand of them. They are the pastors, secretaries, editors, and professors of Methodism in all lands. Again the picture moves. Now there are ten abreast. There are women marching with the men. They all wear some kind of a badge. They are the officers of Methodism, lay preachers, stewards, trustees, class-leaders, sabbath-school superintendents and teachers. There are 350,000 of them. Make way! What a crowd is this! They fill the street from pave to pave. They are of all ages and complexions and tongues. They come from all walks of life, the lowly and the great. Miles upon miles

they crowd the vision. They are the sixteen million Methodists and adherents of Methodism of the American family. It is well to remember that all this vast host is the product of this generation. They are what Methodism has done, not in a hundred years, (to tell that story we should have to call from their graves, or rather from the skies, another host greater than this, and swell the procession in all its guilds to more than double its present size,) but in a single generation. It is not always remembered, that to keep the ranks full simply, to say nothing of increase, Methodism must convert in thirty years a number equal to her entire communion, to fill the places made empty by transfers to the skies. To have the full impression of this great movement, greater by far than we conceive—for even the people called Methodists, much less other people, have no adequate idea of what it is—we must endeavor to bring into our view the present working of this vast army—thirty thousand preachers, every Lord's day preaching sixty thousand sermons to millions of hearers; a sabbath-school force much larger, molding as many millions of youths; other officers working in their appropriate spheres—the whole permeating all lands, working in pulpit, and by the press, and in educational halls, all to build the age in intelligence and virtue, working against vice, against intemperance, against false doctrine, against oppression, against all manner of wrong and sin—working to lift humanity toward God!

Methodism has never been a proselyting system. These are not sheep she has gathered from some other fold. She has given much, but received little. She has sent her converts by thousands into other communions, to be their brightest jewels; she has borrowed but few in return. It is her greatest glory that she has gone to the quarries and wrought

her ornaments and treasures from the rough material. Many of the most honored names on her roll of renown she has gathered not only from the world, but from the humblest walks of life, and many of them from the sinks of vice and irreligion. What they are morally, socially, religiously, aye, and financially, she has made them. She took them from the bogs and morasses, and has set them among the princes of the land.

Nor has she sent her lay converts alone into other folds, replenishing their poverty and enriching them with treasures not won by their own labor, but she has also given many of their pulpits their brightest ornaments. Should some of our sister Churches restore to us our own, it would decimate their ranks, and send a wail through all their borders. We do not ask it, but in reckoning up the trophies of Methodism we remind them that we have to find them among their choicest garlands. Nor do we utter a complaint. Their riches, though our gift, does not leave us poor, though if given back it would make them poor indeed. If while we build our own walls we can build theirs also, we ask but one thing in return: that when they reckon their great names they remember and confess that they are the gift of Methodism to supply a want which they could not supply themselves. Let us thank God that, though sometimes they run away with our treasures with a taunt, and flourish them with pride, God has given to us the honor of such fecundity that we can spare what they so much need, and still have better than we give, and enough.*

To make the picture complete, we must add yet two other parts. These, again, are of the same two periods—1776 and 1884. They represent the material development of

* Notes C, D.

Methodism, or what we have called the equipment for carrying on her work. The first part moves into view. As you see, it is a somewhat dilapidated and unsightly building. A tumbling stairway leads on the outside to the second story. "Sail-loft" is rudely inscribed at the place of entrance. Methodism's birthplace stands before you. No one can gainsay that it was a lowly roof-tree. But was it not also suitable? What more was needed for this lowly company, without even a name or status. Little did they dream, or the passers-by who may have heard their songs, of what was being cradled in that humble nest on that winter day. There was nothing else, and this was but a hired house. The second part of the picture moves into view. It comprises the equipments of Methodism in 1884, as you see by the date in the margin. First, appropriately, come the churches. There are nearly thirty thousand of them, many of them small and humble, for the wilderness and the frontiers, costing but little, but adequate to the wants of those that use them; many of them rich and costly, and not a few magnificent, on principal avenues in the great cities, where the fashionable and wealthy congregate; for the sons and daughters of the humble worshipers of the sail-loft have become rich and refined. Then come the educational piles, some of them ornate and vast, in stone and brick, built to endure through generations and centuries, and all set in beautiful grounds, the fit homes for study and refining culture—a quarter of a thousand of them. Then come the great publishing houses, with their freighted rooms and powerful presses, turning out books by the million. Surrounding and encompassing all are the million homes of our people in all the hamlets and neighborhoods of our great land, and in the great towns and cities of all

the States; the homes where Methodist children are born, and out of which come some of our best citizens, to do the work of advancing civilization. That here, in these four pictures, is a wonderful aggregate to be accounted for, every candid observer must admit—how wonderful none of us fully appreciate! The present we see in part, but the top reaches far beyond our power of comprehension, into the utmost heaven. From small, almost unobservable causes, magnificent results often spring, to teach us that we should not "despise the day of small things;" but neither Church nor State furnishes a single parallel of such amazing growth from insignificant beginnings to magnificent, solid, and enduring effects in the same length of time. The early spread of Christianity and its triumph over effete paganism, and the Reformation under Luther, furnish the only two analogous cases, and certainly, all things considered, neither of these surpasses it. They were alike great spiritual upheavals pressing men and the race onward to God. The first is the fountain-head of the others, and so cannot properly come into the comparison; but certainly as between the second and third, while the reformation of Luther will, on some accounts, take the precedence in the thoughts of men; for purely spiritual results it does not surpass the work started by Mr. Wesley—does not equal it. That stands, clean cut, in the history of the race as a purely revivalistic movement, without admixture or adulteration of any kind, as the Reformation of the sixteenth century does not. To-day it is the sublime fact of an organized spiritual force, uniting and interpenetrating millions of souls—a life-force, growing and propagating itself. It has cut itself so into the religious history of the race, and inwoven itself so into the very texture of its consciousness and theological think-

ing, that it is impossible it should ever be expunged. Whatever may be the future of Methodism, it has an immortal past. Poets and historians and orators will never let the glory of its first hundred years die.

It is fitting that I should give the estimate of an impartial observer: The Rev. Dr. Bellows wrote, in 1866, an appreciative estimate of the work accomplished by Methodism, in which he says: "Individual churches and preachers may record the number of converts made in a year; but of the entire number of converts made by Methodism in this century there are no proximate estimates. But millions have been converted by it, millions have been awakened from their worldliness, started out of their stupor—some from sinful courses—and spiritually quickened and strengthened by its offices and ministrations. Its missionaries have gone down among the poor with their precious messages of penitence and hope; they have followed the emigrant into the wilderness, and have been the pioneers of civilization, scattering the seeds of virtue and enlightenment in waste and desert places; they have done more than can be imagined to restrain, elevate, and educate the common people of our land. There are no moral census tables to tell, in mathematical figures, the real good Methodism has done. The statistics of its work must be studied in the altered lives, and the improved manners and morals, and the noble aims of the people influenced by it, and the higher life of society in the communities where it has flourished. As a religious movement Methodism stands before the world justified in its results."

It is fair that it should be said that Methodism has not been a temporizing Church. The vast host of its converts have not been won by pandering to their prejudices and vices. From the first she has been thorough, outspoken,

and uncompromising. There has never been a moral issue, or political issue involving principle, before the people that she has not been bold in her allegiance to the right. She has invariably taken the highest ground and the front rank. No cause of doubtful nature has ever looked for her support. From the first she recorded her protest against slavery, and incorporated it in her organic law. Her testimony and her laws have ever been unequivocal against the theater, the dance, and all gaming. Against intemperance she has been a burning wrath. No public or private sin has ever escaped her scourge. Mere formalism she has unsparingly denounced. She has demanded a thorough-paced spiritual experience, and a consistent and holy life. Her habit in all these respects has branded her as extreme, and even Puritanical, not to say fanatical, and the straitest of the sects. It is her glory that intense religiousness, separation from the world, and self-denial have always been branded as Methodistic.

If we seek now for the explanation of the amazing facts we have been reciting, it is not probable that we shall find perfect agreement; some will find one solution, some another. Some would be disposed to find it almost exclusively in the supernatural, others are disposed to see in it nothing but the natural. The truth, no doubt, lies in the golden mean. Much must be ascribed to the divine, much to the human, and much to environments. We shall never be able to determine the exact ratio of these factors. When God is the worker, most directly, in spiritual results, he never wholly dispenses with the human, nor does he act in total independence of circumstances.*

* Dr. Stevens says: "In these two facts—the spirit and the practical system of Methodism—inheres the whole secret, if secret it may be called, of its peculiar power."—Vol. i, p. 31. "It was a revival Church in its spirit, a missionary Church in its organization."

As we see it, the explanation is found primarily, if not chiefly, in the peculiar experiences of the principal human agents in the work. The sole single power that made them mighty at the first, and worked through them a reproduction of itself in the souls of others, was God in them. The divine power interpenetrated the human agent and made it superhuman, and the word emanating from them was "in demonstration and power of the Holy Ghost." The source of the whole movement was comprised in an experience which infused their words with a peculiar energy. It was not the power of a new utterance or new method, merely, or, added to those, of a unique human magnetism. The men employed were men of unusual genius. Whitefield, especially, was transcendent in the gift of eloquence, Wesley * in the gift of organization, and Charles Wesley in the gift of sacred poetry. The methods were new and exciting. But all this would have produced but an ephemeral ripple had it not been for that enshrined mystery of the divine power in their souls, and hence in their words.

The power *first* appeared as *appeaseless soul hunger*, which no husks of theology or empty ceremonials could satisfy. It set them to seeking God. It stirred the depths of their being. It would not quiet. It revealed sin to them. It brought them face to face with eternal law and its awful penalties. It pierced them with the arrows of the Almighty. With no one to understand or guide them, they were, not days merely, but years, driven and torn by the terrors of the Lord. These were the months of preparation for the great work Providence was fitting them for. Its value appears in all their after lives. Finally they found God. This

* Macaulay says of John Wesley, that "his genius for government was not inferior to that of Richelieu."—*Essays*, vol. i, p. 221, third London ed.

was the *second* visitation of power in them. If before they could not rest for soul hunger and fear and remorse, now they could not rest for soul joy. They must proclaim the glad tidings. These messages burned on their lips, and burned into the souls of their hearers, and made the hungry multitudes eager to hear them again and again. It, of course, was a message of wrath, for they had felt the woe of sin. It was, of course, a message of mercy, for they had found pardon. It was, of course, a message of joy, for their souls exulted in God. It was the Law and the Gospel melted into one.

They knew not then the full meaning of the revelation which had been made in them; that they had opened the doors of their souls to a power which was to be the source of the thousand earthquakes that began immediately to follow, and that has continued to rock the world for a hundred years. We do not say that there were not Christians before and then, plenty of them; and not a few in the pulpits. Charity requires us to believe there were devout and earnest men in the Churches of Britain. But this we say: that when the souls of these young evangelists were touched with the flame of God's saving love, a spark was emitted which has wrapped the world in conflagration ever since. Seized of this new power, they became a power, and could neither rest themselves nor let others rest. With tearful eyes and heaving breasts they told the irrepressible story. The words were simple, but they dropped among men like lightning from the skies, and so smote them that they fell as dead men to the ground. The influence was infectious. Conversions followed—soul births into a new life—clear, distinct, exultant. It was Pentecost, with tongues of fire come again. The old effects followed. Men could not stand before it. Man is

sympathetic. Doubtless this will account for much. The mysterious influence which seized one soul propagated itself in others. It found fuel, corded and hungry of combustion, in every human breast. It struck a chord in every awakened soul which found an echo in every other. As if some celestial current had been suddenly, and for the first time, started, it drew the half frightened, sin-sorrowful multitude toward God, until they touched his garments and were healed.

This was Methodism's first power. Its second was an outbirth from it, and permeated by it. It consisted of its new method of evangelizing and theologizing.

It has been many times said that Methodism has furnished nothing new in theology; that the world owes to it the discovery of no new truth; that it has added nothing to the stock of religious ideas; that, in fact, it nowhere crosses the lines of intellect; that it is a mere wave of feeling, a surface-ripple of sentiment, which, running its course, must soon subside. This theory is put forth in that notable, and in the main candid, work of Isaac Taylor, on "The Problem of Wesleyanism." It is repeated in the essay already referred to of Dr. Bellows, also an able, and in the main fair, treatment of the same subject. He says: "Methodism was essentially a religious movement, and as such was self-limited, both in power and *duration*. It grew out of a necessity. It met a want. It performed a mighty and holy work. But this work was essentially revivalistic. It dealt with sentiment. Its appeals were to the heart, with whatever could awaken its fears or its hopes, its penitence or its affection. But it was destitute of ideas. It has contributed no thought to the intellectual property of the world. It is identified with no permanent principles of the philosophy of moral order. No great truth is necessarily involved in its existence and pledged

to give it perpetuity. However it may have invigorated the *springs* of intellect, the history of intellect nowhere crosses its lines. Though essentially connected with certain doctrines chosen out of existing beliefs, by 'a law of selection' hard to understand, it is not necessarily restricted to them, and would be just as much at home in the Swedenborgian or the Universalist scheme of theology. But all such fluent movements shortly subside if they are not confirmed and supported by ideas. For truth is the sign and secret of stability: it is the principle of permanence; and only as a body has firm hold upon some truth or principle of the spiritual order has it the keys of the kingdom and the promise of the future." * This is a very remarkable statement, both for its insight and its misconceptions. There is a deep and true philosophy in it, but it is misapplied. Its estimate of Methodism is both true and false, and it is the half truth which vitiates the conclusion. It is true that it was essentially a revivalistic movement; but it is not true that it was simply a feeling. It is not true that it has not a doctrinal basis. It is not true that it did not and does not connect itself with ideas. It is not true that it is identified with no principles of moral order. It is not true that "it has contributed no thought to the intellectual property of the world." These statements are misjudgments, and do not accord with the facts of history. It is true that it added no new fundamental article to the common Protestant creed; that it announced no newly discovered doctrine; that it did not start

* Something like this is conceded by Dr. Abel Stevens, in his "History of Methodism," vol. i, p. 29. The most common charge brought against the fathers of Methodism was, that they preached a new and denied the old Gospel. The false doctrine they preached was dilated upon in all the pulpits. Books and pamphlets flooded the land against these new doctrines.

as a theory; that its doctrinal basis had been formulated in substance time and again; but this is far from saying that it was not grounded in principle, and that it did not nucleate around a system of truth, and derive and sustain its life from hidden springs of doctrine. The truth is, that no Church has ever presented a more compact and well-defined creed, and that no creed was ever more directly productive of a movement than was the creed of Methodism productive of its work. It was a faith as unmistakably as it was a feeling—the faith and feeling twin and inseparable. Nor is it true that its theology was not in important respects a novelty. If it was conspicuously an awakening of spiritual consciousness, it was also a quickening of intellectual life and activity which has been felt along all the lines of theological thought, and which has radically affected the conception of religion and of fundamental doctrines throughout Christendom. No creed has been untouched by it. It is believed that it has done more to rectify theology, in the matter of popular opinions upon the subject of God's sovereignty and man's responsibility, on the doctrines of sin, of the atonement, of human freedom, than all other agencies put together. It has worked a revolution on these subjects. This has been one of its most pronounced and significant functions. It gives caste to the religious faith of to-day. Dr. Bellows seems strangely to have forgotten the theological controversies carried on with such vigor in the first half of the century, and also to have forgotten that victory was so confessedly on the side of the Methodist champions, that the doctrines which they opposed have been retired from the pulpit and practically from all the teachings of the times. It is doubtful if any Church for the last hundred years has wrought such profound revolutions of thought.

In the form and letter, some doctrines were not, indeed, changed; but, seen in the light of their new experience, they were, though old, in fact a discovery absolutely new. It was the old doctrine of man's fall and ruin, his deep and utter sinfulness, which had come down over the ages, handed along from Paul to Augustine, and from Augustine to Calvin and Luther; the same that was preached every Lord's day from all the pulpits and recited from all the Catechisms; it was that same doctrine, but what now was it that set the people smiting their breasts, and hurled them to the earth like swaths before the mower's scythe? Was there no new essence here? It was the old doctrine of the Cross, of the Atonement, formulated in all the creeds, discussed with masterly skill in the theological books, and meted and bounded with geometrical precision in the sermons and the treatises of the learned. But what was it now that set the people weeping when they heard of Calvary, and which broke their hearts when they listened to the story of redemption? After all, there was something new in the meaning. The essence was something which the old teachings had somehow missed.

Never before since apostolic times was Christ so preached. Never was so preached the Holy Spirit, his awakening, converting, and sanctifying power. Never was so preached the doctrine of pardon, the promises, the new birth, the witness of the Spirit, a full, free, and perfect salvation. These great experimental verities were now voiced as if they had been never before spoken. The letter that killeth was in the world; stark and dead, it rattled its dry bones over every pulpit in Christendom; but now it became alive, a spirit entered into it, and sent it burning its way into the hearts of men. It was the same truth, yet as different from the other as a living body differs from a dead corpse.

Methodism was then a theology, and was new, in that it was a theology made alive by the indwelling Spirit, intensified in the perception and conviction of the truth, brought down from the cold, arid regions of mere dogmatic statement, from the misty height of intellectual speculation and logic, to the warm and fervid atmosphere of sympathy and affection. The God that had been afar off, sitting on the throne of his feelingless absolute sovereignty, who for his own glory and sovereign pleasure had fixed all events in fate, electing some men to salvation and consigning others to hopeless reprobation, was therein brought nigh, and a Father's heart was given him. Jesus took flesh and walked among us, and we beheld his glory. Sin and holiness and heaven and hell were brought down from the realms of doubt and mysticism, and men saw and felt that they were real, great, and earnest verities. In a word, the whole circle of truths which relate to the soul's peace, and to the soul's life and destiny, was conceived of and felt with a freshness and power, as if a revelation now for the first time made them known on earth. Thus Methodism's first and second power, now blended into one, was the power of a great soul-earnestness, fused with the grandest and mightiest truths conjointly battering at the doors of human hearts, and carrying them by escalade or winning them by love. The same writer already quoted, with a better and truer appreciation, says: "It commenced as an inspiration. It was a new out-pouring of the Holy Spirit. Its apostles and missionaries had a baptism as of fire. The Spirit of the Lord was upon them to preach his Gospel to the poor. They went forth strong in his might, taking no scrip, nor staff, nor thought of what they should say. Their preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom; but they spoke what he gave them to utter with an

unction and power which shivered the shield of the adversary and overcame the proudest heart. For three quarters of a century Methodism was the breath of God blowing across the continent, refreshing and reviving faint and dying souls, giving new life to millions, and changing the condition of the religious atmosphere of the world."

Springing from its deep spiritual consciousness, its intensified experiences, its apostolic zeal, its awful sense of sin, its clear conception of the new birth, its emboldening faith of assurance, its clear sense of the witness of the Spirit, its triumphant joy, its grand idea of the redemptive scheme as universal—as within the reach of every sinner, however outcast, as furnishing the means of a perfect salvation to the entire world—its great thought of the fatherhood of God and the equality and brotherhood of men, its greater emphasis of the doctrine of human freedom, its vindication of the divine character and government from the aspersions cast upon it by the popular creed:—springing from these, as voiced by them, clearer and more satisfactory views in theology, the preaching of Methodists was new, wonderful and entrancing. The multitude rushed to hear it, and listened as if a new Gospel was for the first time voiced from the sky! Never before since Paul's time had men heard such words! Call it old; yes, in some sense it was; but to the ears that heard it, and to the hearts that felt it, it was new. Every new convert became a preacher. He had something for himself to tell, something which he personally knew, something which he related with tears of joy from a happy heart. The shops and the market thrilled with the marvelous stories. The words were simple, but the sermons thus preached by rustics and citizens and women were full of irresistible pathos and awakening power. They were all preach-

ers, both at home and in the assemblies where they were permitted to tell the wonderfulness of God's love in saving them. Their enthusiasm kept the flame burning. While the lay converts kept fuel on the altars at home, the preachers, forsaking all, without scrip or purse in some instances, after the apostolic model, went over wide circuits, sometimes hundreds of miles, preaching every day, often several times a day, to small companies or large, in the cabins and by the roadside. They had but little learning—some of them none—but they had learned by experience the story of the Cross. The people preferred them to the gowned and pompous parsons. Crowds followed them to the school-house, or, when that was denied, to the court-house, or, when that was denied, to the private house or barn or grove. Many mocked, more wept; multitudes were saved.

It is doubtful if, on the whole, the world ever heard more effective preaching, or, even not excepting the first fifty years of apostolic ministries, if ever more signal divine power attended the truth than accompanied these wilderness preachers, fitly styled "the thundering legion of the militant Church." It was no uncommon thing for men to fall suddenly under their words as if pierced with an invisible arrow from Jehovah's quiver.

We have said that the environments accounted for much. These, in justice, must be taken into the account. These may be summed up in these statements: The people, neglected by the Churches, had been permitted to fall into a dreadful state of ignorance about spiritual things, and into a frightful condition of irreligion and wickedness. This was so in the old world when Methodism sprung up there. Isaac Taylor, himself a Churchman, says, when Wesley appeared the Anglican Church was "an ecclesiastical system

under which the people of England had lapsed into heathenism, or a state hardly to be distinguished from it," and that Methodism "preserved from extinction the languishing Nonconformity of the last century, which, just at the time of the Methodist revival, was rapidly in course to be found nowhere but in books." * A high American authority says: "That something of vital Christianity exists among professed believers of every name; that the doctrine of justification by faith is generally understood and preached; that we are not blind Pharisees, or dead formalists, or practical Socinians and deists, we may trace the cause in great part—we cannot tell how largely—to the Holy Club of Oxford Methodists." †

Bishop Burnet says: "I cannot look on without the deepest concern when I see the imminent ruin hanging over this Church, and, by consequence, over the whole Reformation. The outward state of things is black enough, God knows; but that which heightens my fears rises chiefly from the inward state into which we are unhappily fallen." Of the clergy he says, "The much greater part of those who come to be ordained are ignorant to a degree not to be apprehended by those who are not obliged to know it. The easiest part of knowledge is that to which they are most strangers. Those who have read some few books never seem to have read the Scriptures. Many cannot give a tolerable account even of the Catechism itself, how short and plain soever. The case is not much better in many who, having got into orders, come for institution, and cannot make it appear that they have read the Scriptures." Watts declares that there was "a general decay of vital religion in

* Isaac Taylor's "Wesley and Methodism," pp. 56, 57.

† "Bibliotheca Sacra," January, 1864.

the hearts and lives of men, that this declension of piety and virtue was common among Dissenters and Churchmen."

Archbishop Secker says: "Such are the dissoluteness and contempt of principle in the higher part of the world, and the profligacy and intemperance and fearlessness of committing crimes in the lower, as must, if this torrent of impiety stop not, become absolutely fatal." * The condition of religion in America was scarcely better than it was in England. The clergy never fell so low; but the prevailing doctrine had in some sections emptied the churches, and produced a wide-spread indifference and neglect, and in others the means of grace did not at all exist. There was no adequate provision, except in the heart of the population, for the Christianization of the masses, and they were in danger of becoming paganized. After the great revival in New England, called the Edwardian revival, the Churches had lapsed into a deadness which portended in some sections the dissolution almost of Christianity itself, even among the Puritans. A generation had passed with but few conversions, and the term had become a derision.

This lamentable condition was largely owing to the prevalent doctrine of high and ultra Calvinism. The preaching had deadened the religious consciousness, and produced a revolt equally both of conscience and reason, and stifled all respect for Christianity, except on the part of the few who supposed themselves to be of the elect. The churches were neglected, and the ministers of such a faith naturally enough, with few exceptions, gave themselves no concern. Preaching was confined to the town, and the clergy went only where they were called. There were no adequate means, no disposition, to carry the Church into the

* See Stevens's "Centenary of American Methodism," pp. 43–45.

wilderness. The ministry was a guild, more learned than zealous, proud of their rank and careful of their dignity, but not given much to labors for the poor and the degraded. Such a faith and such a clergy made a condition of things favorable to the successes which attended Methodism. Disgusted and disheartened with a gospel which seemed to them no gospel, as in fact it was not, their hearts were ready to leap when they heard of a different kind of God and Saviour to that which they had learned from the Catechism, and which had frozen and frightened them when children. The non-elect were the million. The Methodists betook themselves to these, and brought not only the truth to them, in denial and protest against the awful decree which excluded them, but brought the Church also. There was already a revolt deep-seated and wide. Incipient Unitarianism was beginning to lift a protest against the horrors of orthodoxy. It was cleaving the Christian camp in twain. But it had nothing to give the hungry people. It could divide, but could not build up. Its errors were even a worse evil than those against which it protested. It tended to destruction of the foundations. This is not what the deepest in man wants. It proved a failure. Universalism was a protest, but it did not win. The protest was hailed, but the refuge it offered was not considered safe. There were many that were willing to risk it, or any thing, to escape the horrible decree. But, though conscience and reason were on the side of the protest, they could not be enlisted in favor of the proposed remedy. Methodism cut the gordian knot. It joined in the protest: its voice was loudest: its logic was keenest. It discovered and pointed out a refuge which was built on the foundation of right reason, conscience, and the word of God. It bridged the gulf

between the heathen million and the elect few. It brought back Christ to the people. It brought the Church to the perishing multitude. It brought bread for every hungry soul, and hope to every aching heart. Conscience stood for it. Reason stood for it. The Bible stood for it. The hungry multitude were ready to embrace it. Methodism stood so near to them that she felt their great heart-throbs. She stretched out her arms to them and bade them come. She went into their neglected homes and pronounced blessings upon them. Tenderness was in her heart and consolation on her tongue. She lifted up the fallen, and bound up the wounds of those ready to perish. She offered them a physician and an asylum.

Is it any wonder that they were moved and won and saved; that they heard the heavenly Shepherd's voice and followed him to the fold; or, weak and wounded, were borne in his arms? From these unshepherded flocks she gathered the true elect, and presented them as the brightest trophies of grace and saving power.

Ye who seek for the philosophy of Methodism's triumphs over her enemies, and of the great spiritual work she has wrought; who would explain how it was that she came forth a weakling, a pigmy among the giants, an unharnessed rustic among hosts of mailed warriors, and seized the prey; how it was that, with sling and stone, she prostrated the proud Goliaths, brought down the enemies of her King, and put the armies of the aliens to flight; find it here, in the matchless truth which she preached, and specially in this, that it was of God and not of man—Omnipotence choosing the weak things of the world to confound the great and the mighty, that the glory might be of God and not of men. Men may create commotions which run through ages, and along the lines of nations; but when the force culminates

in regenerations of human souls, in lifting masses and millions of men up into the divine, in setting in array agencies working the deepest and most sacred transformations of the entire aims and pursuits and character of multitudes of men; when this continues a uniform and permanent effect, then let men know that, whatever the instrument, the power is of God: "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."

If to-day suggests retrospect, it is no less a Pisgah of prospect. If it thrusts upon us memories of the struggles and victories of the past, it also bears us on to the contemplation of the future. The *has been* is linked with the *will be*. As the old century recedes, the new advances. With grateful tears we wave farewells to the one, and hold up signals of welcome to the other. Will Methodism have a future? It has been a favorite fancy from the first that Methodism would be a short-lived force. Isaac Taylor gave it from eighty to a hundred years. The period he fixed for the beginning of its rapid decadence long since passed, and since that it has gone on increasing as much as at any former period. Dr. Bellows said, twenty years ago: "The future of Methodism seems to us far less brilliant and grand than many predict it will be. The circumstances in which it originated, and to which it is indebted for its wonderful success, have entirely changed. There is more religious interest and zeal in all denominations now than there there was a century ago; all Churches are now laboring to ameliorate the condition and improve the character of the poor and degraded, as none thought of doing when the century commenced. Methodism will not find the material to work upon in the future that has been plentiful in the past. And Methodism itself has changed. As we study the

character and workings of Methodism we are more and more convinced that the wave of inspiration in which it had its origin has well-nigh spent its force, and will soon die down altogether. We no longer witness the same zeal, the holy fervor, the renunciation of the world, the self-sacrifice, nor the heroic exertion for religion's sake in the Methodist Church as characterized it thirty, or even twenty, years ago. Its preaching has lost much of its old unction, directness, and savor of life—the dialect of the Holy Ghost—and has become doctrinal, defensive, and half apologetic. It is trying to hold the ground by conforming to custom, courting popularity, practicing the worldly arts of success, rather than pushing on to make new conquests for the kingdom, setting up a new standard of holiness, exposing the sophistries of the schools by the logic of events, and making history for other men to write and read. The institution has supplanted the inspiration; and the former stands still to tell how high the flood-tide rose, and what wonders it performed."

This is a very suggestive statement, the more so that it is that of a generous critic. No one dare say that it is so violently improbable as to deserve no attention. It must be admitted that history is alive with illustrations of great social, civil, and religious movements, which in their time bodied immense energy; yet which, having answered their temporary end of reform, or progress, became inoperative and vanished as a wave gone by. All great forces are not permanent, either in action or result. The storm lashes the sea until it heaves to its lowermost depths, but when it has exhausted its fury the tempest subsides, and not a ripple remains.

It is a great, and to us a momentous, question, Is Method-

ism to furnish one more instance of the shortlivedness of a matchless spiritual movement? Has she answered the end for which she was providentially raised up? Has the time come when her longer existence is an impertinence, an anachronism, as a thing out of date—disturbing rather than helpful, now that its function is ended? It may be well to remember, that if both nature and history furnish examples of great forces which exhaust themselves and pass away, they also, in both the natural and spiritual realms, furnish examples of the opposite—of forces that contain within themselves a law of permanence and self-propagativeness, which having evolved one great result, go on evolving others greater still in regular ratio of increase, with ever-widening functions, as a seed which sends forth a cluster of seeds to produce a forest rather than a single tree; then reproduces itself in broader areas each cycle. May not Methodism be of this later kind—a divine life-giving power, evolved not for one solitary quickening, however great, or for merely a brief and spasmodic influence upon and among permanent existing forces; but rather for multiplying and enduring effects—a centralized power remaining and energizing forever? Let us be brave enough and true enough to look the problem square in the face, and deal with it with perfect candor. If there be difficulties and dangers in our situation, it is wisdom not to make ourselves blind to them. If they be irremediable, we cannot be hurt by coming to the knowledge of that fact. If they be such as wise churchmanship can remedy, it is important still that they should have timely attention. If they be imaginary, we ought to know that. It is a good time to study the situation. I confess to the feeling that we have reached a critical period in our history. There are some threatening omens. I think it becomes us to be thoroughly

awake. We have probably reached a time when some determinative action is called for. It is important that we should find what that is.

The grounds upon which it is inferred that our mission as a Church is ended are, that Methodism is merely a wave of emotional excitement—that there is such a change in the condition that such effects as formerly attended our ministry are now uncalled for and impossible—that the material is used up—that other Churches are meeting the demands—that Methodism has itself changed and has no longer its old power.

That a great change has supervened in the direction of these several points there can be no question, and that the change makes the same kind of effects impossible is, we are ready to believe, highly probable. The change is both objective and subjective; a change within and without; a change in the instrument, in the work to be accomplished, and in the phenomena attending the work. It is important that we form a proper estimate of the change, to see how far it implies decay, if at all; and to see how far we should look for the restoration of vanished phenomena, or attempt to bring about effects which have disappeared; or, in other words, to see whether the change indicates decay or only a new phase of life, calling for new methods. Let us calmly but earnestly look at the case, as far as possible, in all its bearings. I agree to the full with the remarkably incisive and beautiful sentiment that "Truth is the sign and secret of stability. It is the principle of permanence, and only as a body has firm hold on some truth or principle of the spiritual order has it the keys of the kingdom and the promise of the future."

It is tacitly assumed, in all these prognostics about the

decline of Methodism, that the changed state of things has done away with any need for her further agency; and that the changes within herself indicate failure of energy and decrepitude. Even Methodists themselves, under this hallucination, sometimes become discouraged. Now, neither of these things is necessarily true, and both of them are certainly false. If, to be useful at all, she must forever continue to meet the same peculiar needs which environed her at the start, and none others, then, when those peculiar needs were supplied, her function would, of course, cease, and there would be nothing left but for her to disappear. But from what principle is this to be inferred? If to retain her power she must remain unchanged in every particular, then changes in her methods would imply loss of vigor and signs of decay; but what if her internal changes are only adaptations to new external conditions, would they not, or in any event might they not, in that case only insure her permanence, and indicate the best of all power—power to adapt herself to varying contingencies without loss of vitality? The vicious assumption underlying all such reasoning is, that change from her original type is necessary death or degeneracy; that she must always have a poor and neglected mass to look after, or she is of no use; that there must be dead Churches, or there is no need of her; that she must always feed on excitement or be moribund. This ruinous notion is sometimes domesticated, and made to breed mischief within the Church itself.

Confessedly a change has come, a change which renders some facts and methods impossible now and uncalled for, that were once effective and necessary. There is a work to be done, but not precisely the same in its accidents while the same in its essence. There is the same need of work

and zeal; but work of another kind, and zeal manifesting itself in another way. Some of her poor have become rich, must she, therefore, forsake them? Would it be wisdom or folly to do what is no longer either possible or needed? She must recognize the new conditions. She must adopt corresponding methods. Her enthusiasm must take a new form. The new work may demand other methods: but the agent may remain the same. Different phenomenal effects may characterize the new kind of work done.

The questions for us to ask are, What are the changed conditions? What is the work to be done? and, What are the best methods of doing that work? This will be directly carrying out the very essence of the original spirit and genius of Methodism. To ignore the new demands, and attempt to do what has ceased to be of use, were the sure guaranty of failure. To assume, that because the occasion for what was the very thing to be done when we started has ceased, that therefore our mission is ended,—or that, because we were adapted to that occasion, we are useless to any other,—or that there is nothing else for which she is needed, is inconsequent and impertinent.

What are the new demands, and what ought to be the new methods? Let us not make a mistake here. The thing to be done is *in essence* always the same: there is no change in this regard: it is to save men, to bring sinners to God, to raise up a holy people. That remains as much the work of Methodism to-day as it ever was. It is as much needed to-day as it ever was. To accomplish it, changed conditions make new demands. Some of the methods which were once useful to that end possibly are not useful now, or not the best means of meeting present difficulties. What would have been useless then may be called for now. She

must be skillful enough to discern and provide for the emergency. It would be improper to say that she is more necessary now than in the crisis which brought her forth. That were impossible. There could be no greater necessity than that. But that a greater work has developed on her hand than any she has yet done cannot be questioned; and that what remains needs her as much as she was ever needed, is also true. The demand for her best energies was never greater than it is to-day.

As she was needed to quicken Christianity at first, so she is needed to keep it alive now. She is not needed to look after the poor in the same degree and manner that she once was, for two reasons—both of them largely ascribable to her agency—their condition is not the same as it was then, and other Churches have been incited to share in the work of providing for them. She is not called to employ the same methods she once used, for two reasons: they are not so specially demanded, and would not, in the altered conditions, be useful. She may not create the same enthusiasm she once did for the same reason — the changed conditions make it impossible.

The change in the general condition of the people and of the Churches—their greater intelligence, the better provisions for religious instruction, the new appliances, the different attattitude of the masses to religious and spiritual problems—render old methods ineligible. Methodism is now called, as are all other Churches, to provide the kind of agencies these new demands create. What these agencies are will be discussed a little further on; at present we want to keep our thought steadily on the questions, What is the work to be done? and, What is the part of the work we are called to do? The answer to these will determine two things, namely,

what kind of instrumentalities must be employed, and what kind of effects we may reasonably expect will follow.

First. Methodism must still be a *converting* power. There can be no living Church without this. This is as much a need to-day as when Wesley preached to the colliers at Kingswood; as much needed by the refined and cultured and wealthy as it ever was by the ignorant and poor. Awakenings and conversions may not be attended with the same external signs. That is a matter of indifference, and variable; but they must be as genuine and radical as then. The mourner's bench may have become obsolete, because no longer useful, but the demand for penitence will never cease. To awaken it in the soul, and bring the conscience-stricken to the Saviour, remains, and will remain, the work to which the Church is called. For a hundred years Methodism has been chief in this line. She has taught others the holy art. That is well, but she must not forget it herself. She lifted the poor when they had no other friends to help them. The poor we still have with *us*, and she must still go after them as tenderly and earnestly as ever. But she has now the added duty of saving the rich. This work must not be left undone.

Second. Methodism must build up her converts in holy faith. She must keep sacredly in memory that holiness is the sign of the Christian's life. Her ministries must be to edification in righteousness and also in intelligence. It is hers to develop in the hearts and homes of her people the most beautified piety—not cant, not affectation, but sturdy and manly religion.

Millions are looking to her for education and moral training. It is hers to build a majority of the Christian homes of the coming century; and, if she discharges her trust faith-

fully, of many centuries to come. From her altars are to go forth sons and daughters who will fill all positions of life, from the lowliest to the loftiest. She is to train them to fidelity and honor by instilling into them the fear of God and the love of the purest and noblest virtues. Thus she is to lay hands on the children of the rising generation, and fashion and mold in them, by her teachings and faithful discipline of the home and Church, such qualities of character as will make them loyal and useful citizens. It is hers to rear the wisest statesmen, the truest merchants, the ablest artisans, the most Christian scholars, the ripest divines, the noblest saints. Entering into the great reformatory movements and missionary enterprises, she is, by the consecration of her wealth and the employment of her talents to stand foremost in spreading the amenities of civilization and in enforcing the sanctities of religion among all nations. Her hand and intellect are to improve literature and trade and art. The truth and the heart-impulse committed to her of God she is to disseminate and defend. She is to stand as the firm opposer of all error of doctrine, and every wrong and wicked practice. She has peculiar relations to theology. She is almost the sole representative of certain great doctrines. She must be loyal to them. She is the providential guardian of Arminianism. The old Calvinists have largely yielded their ancient creed, and use her "shibboleth" in their pulpits and later writings; and to Methodism, for the doctrines of human freedom, universal atonement, and free grace for all, all alike must turn for their truest and most loyal support. Without bigotry she must be positive. Cultivating the most generous liberality toward all, she must yet be true to her spirit and traditions. Her pulpits and pens, under God, have yet a great work to do.

Thus it appears, that instead of having become obsolete and of no more use, Methodism enters her second century with a greater work than ever before her, in the ratio of the increase of her means. God will hold her responsible for what he has made it possible for her to do. He has given her the people, he has given her wealth, he has given her the equipment, he has placed her in the van of his great militant Church as a world-conquering force: she must advance!

That there is a glorious future for her of long and hallowed successes, of magnificent and useful labors, there is no room to doubt, unless she become strangely treacherous to her duty and opportunities. Her brilliant morning is but the harbinger of a resplendent day. The marvels of her first century, we may believe, are but the precursors of the hallowed wonders she is to witness in the long march of the coming ages. The work looking to her at home is greater than ever before. The demand is increased by the widening area and immense growth of population in our land. Before the century closes we shall, at the present rate of increase, reach three quarters of a million, and before the first half of her second century, or in less than fifty years, we shall have not less than 150,000,000 at the present rate of increase.*

* The population of the United States was estimated by the Treasury Department, July 2, 1883, to be 54,163,000 against 52,799,000 upon the corresponding date in 1882. It is calculated by the treasury officials that our increase of population is at the rate of 1,300,000 per annum, which is certainly modest, as it is only little more than double our increase by immigration alone. The population January 1, 1884, may be set down as 54,800,000 against 53,500,000 January 1, 1883. Of this increase of 1,300,000, immigration from foreign shores takes the credit this year (1883) of 560,000 souls. The immigration in 1882 was 712,542. The immigration of the last six years furnishes a basis of calculation: 1878, 153,207; 1879, 250,565; 1880, 593,703; 1881, 720,945; 1882, 712,542; 1883,

This enormous growth of population, with the vast element by immigration from the Old World of peoples of all faiths and opinions spread out over the immense new regions of the West, where our organization over vast areas is almost the only molding factor, creates a demand greater than ever before for our vigorous activity. Every thoughtful patriot and statesman is depending on us for valiant service. No one can tell how much the future prosperity of our country depends on our diligence and fidelity. Not simply do these masses largely depend on us for the Gospel to save them from becoming paganized, but to us they look for education and assimilation to American ideas and training in the rights and duties of freemen. We cannot escape great responsibility. The same is true of our relations to the Freedmen. A large part of them are our wards, and their proper care will tax our best wisdom for a long time to come. God has made us guardians, and we dare not either resign the charge or diminish the care.

But if our work widens at home, the same is true in the mission field. We have sent our sons and daughters into nearly all the lands of the world. They have won thousands of converts from among the heathen. Whole Conferences have grown up in unchristian lands, and others among effete forms of Christianity. They, and hundreds of millions behind them, look to us for support and for the Christianization which they need. Should we now forsake them, or fail to provide adequately for the demands we have created in them, the very heathen themselves would have the right to cry out against us.

560,000. Of the immigration of 1883, 180,000 were Germans; 80,000, English and Welsh; 64,000, Irish; 30,000, Swedish and Italian; besides scores of thousands from other nationalities.

We come now to consider requisites to the work yet before us. The chapters following deal largely with this question, but there are some things which ought to be mentioned in this connection. That it is possible we should fail, and so fulfill the predictions of our critics, and that of this there is danger, has been conceded. That there is a drift in the direction of less result than we ought to attain, I think, is too apparent to escape observation. What, then, are our wants to insure continued success, and send our Church along the second century with a power and efficiency equal, if not superior, to that of our first hundred years.

Some things greatly needed at first are not among our wants now. Time and the blessing of God have furnished these. We do not want riches; once we did. They are very necessary to the work of a Church. There are things which nothing but money can provide. But this is not our pressing need just now. Once our Church was poor, her hands were hard, her garments coarse and plain, her face soiled with the sweat of manual, but honest, toil; her children came from the lanes and highways, from the field and workshop. Now she is rich, the cot is changed for the palace, the home-spun for purple, the rigging-loft for marble churches. When she was poor she was mighty, despite her scanty means. Her wealth puts a new power in her hand. She can do now what once she could not. One of her great wants is the right use of her riches. They may hurt or help, which will depend on the manner in which they affect her spirit and the use she makes of them.

She wants not now social rank and position; once she did. Now she has them. She sits among the rulers of the land, she lives at court, she is in honor. Her colliers and cobblers have come to be merchant princes; and her rustic

converts have grown up families of refinement and culture. With all sensible people she is sufficiently respected.

Nor is her want in theology, or economy, or adaptation. Her theology molds the best thoughts of all schools; her economy challenges admiration, despite the criticism to which it is exposed. It is believed that, for the purposes for which the Church exists, her economy is not only well adapted, but, all things considered, none better has ever been devised. It is not perfect, but it has in it the best elements of efficiency. It is probable that in the future, as in the past, modifications will be needed, and will be provided. This is a subject to which the best thought of the Church should be patiently and earnestly applied. There are, no doubt, some real demands which are not properly met; but that is true of any possible arrangement: and how to meet them, without crippling her efficiency in other respects, is the problem which time and patience and increased experience will ultimately solve.

She does not want to court the world, to let down her standard to meet the popular taste, to set her sails for the wealthy and the great; nor does she want to reject or repel them. Her mission is to the rich and the poor; the refined and the uncultured; to one class just as much as another, and to all alike. They all crowd her communion, and are all in that great world for whose salvation she is to labor. She is to know no distinction among them. At her altars, whether in the humble chapel or magnificent churchly edifice, they are to stand side by side as children of one Father, and brothers equally beloved. We have seen the work she is to do now and for the coming age. As we see it, for that work, she wants the following things:—

First. Her greatest want, which is a permanent and per-

petual need under all changes of condition and time and place, a want as inherent as is that of sap to the life of the tree, as the blood or heart itself is to the life of the body, is God in her heart—inward power. Her greatest want will always be this. This, wanting nothing else, will be of avail. Her riches and improved respectability, and even her greater learning and culture, will be her bane and her curse, will weaken and shackle and destroy her, if she think to do without this. What she needs at the beginning of this new century most vitally pertains to her pulpits and altars and heart shrines. She needs, first of all, most of all—so most of all as to be almost alone, as including the supply of all other demands—a baptism of her ancient zeal and love and fire. This is what she wants in her pulpit. I institute no comparison now between the pulpit of to-day and the pulpit of the past. I do not infer, from the fact that the marked effects which attended the preaching of the fathers do not appear in our time, that therefore either the preachers are less pious or the sermons inferior in quality. I doubt not that both men and sermons are, on an average, equal to those of the best days of the Church—neither materially better nor worse. The want I name was a necessity then; it is a necessity now; it will be a necessity while the world lasts. The pulpit is God's appointment to spiritually impress and save men. To do its work effectively its appeals and warnings and instructions must emanate from holy hearts and holy lips, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. The greater the light, the greater the need of this peculiar power. Ignorant masses are much more easily moved and impressed than people of culture. Their emotions lie nearer the surface, and are more readily reached. Their attention is more easily gained; their wonder, their fear, their hope, is each

more easily stirred. They are more easily excited to action. Their movements are more noisy and demonstrative and infectious. It is easy to carry the crowd. The same sermon that would move some assemblies to the profoundest depths, would not create a ripple on others. But be the assembly what it may, for spiritual results the need is a divinely magnetized agency.

I do not forget that, after all, it is the truth spoken, rather than the speaker, which is the instrument; but, while the truth spoken by polluted lips and without heart, simply by the external lip and voice, may sporadically move souls to a holy quickening, it will remain a truth forever, that to create a holy Church there must be a holy ministry. Like priest, like people. If the pulpit lack, so will the pew. To carry Methodism as a living power into the coming century, her pulpit must be on fire. Nay, she wants more than this; more even than the Holy Ghost in the soul of the preacher: (I speak the almost fearful words with reverence:) she wants men of breadth, men of study, men of industry, men of varied learning, men abreast of the deep-questionings of the age, men gifted with rare powers of thought and speech, and behind none in acquirements. In saying this I do not forget that our ministry is to be "not with enticing words of man's wisdom;" for God "hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty," that our faith "should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." We have come to an age when all these qualities are needed, and when God demands them of his servants in the ministry. But deeper by far than all these is the want of His presence in the soul. He can magnify himself by the weakest instrument, however he might prefer the strongest; but he will have holy men to speak for

him. The Church wants to-day men mighty with God—men of faith and the Holy Ghost. If she wants them gifted as Paul, or eloquent as Apollos, much more she requires them to have as burning zeal and holy love and complete devotion as glowed in the breasts of the early apostles and martyrs. And why shall not this want be met? Is there lack of motive? Are there limitations in God? Is there any reason why we should be straitened, except by our own unfaithfulness? Do we not know, that in the great fight we are passing through, nothing short of our best and greatest power, with the Holy Ghost added to strengthen and help our infirmities, will suffice? Dear as the salvation of this world is to God, he has made its salvation largely dependent on man. So with other precious gifts. Men may have civilization if they will; may have liberty; may have the keys of knowledge; may have the harvests of the earth, or the treasures of the mines: but if they will not, they may have barbarism, oppression, ignorance, starvation, and poverty. So is it with his Church: if she will, she may prosper and conquer; but if her ministers will be treacherous or unfaithful, she may degenerate into spiritual death and become a mocking and a pervert.

But the pulpit cannot do this work alone. There are wants which it cannot meet. The aggregate force of Methodism as a religious power and influence must be not what the pulpit furnishes: it needs holiness in the pew as well as in the pulpit. It needs the concentrated spiritual vitality and energy of its great laity; their fervent prayers and aggressive zeal. They hold the sinews of war. Their wealth must be consecrated. They must hold up the hands that hold up the standard. If there be a want which rises to the first magnitude, it is the want of Christian men of business,

who carry religion into trade, and consecrate their gains to the cause of God; Christian men in the professional and influential walks of life; men of affairs and men of power, who will stand up boldly for Christ and his cause. The times specially demand this. Power and influence are arrayed against Christ. The young are in danger. The stability of religious ideas is threatened. The power of the world has become alarming. Fashion sets against homely virtue. To prevent the breastworks from being carried, and destruction from setting in like a flood, in which our most prized things shall perish, it is requisite that every friend of God and man should be at his post, in the full measure of his strength.

These wants are not peculiar to ourselves. They are common to the ministry of every Church, and to the laity of every Church. We need strengthening along all the outposts. It will require the combined wisdom of Christendom to meet and overcome the adverse forces which are setting in from all quarters. Ephraim must cease to envy Judah, and Judah must cease to vex Ephraim. The standard of loyalty to God and his ordinances needs to be elevated in all the borders of Zion.

There can be no doubt of the fact, that the vast changes of the last few years—changes which denote real progress, changes which we all hail as beneficent—put us under the severest tests, and make new demands upon us. There is danger that in the rush we become confused. The many voices are distracting. In the trampling of the hosts there is danger that the most sacred things be trodden under foot. The whole world has been so suddenly brought together, that in the excitement and hurry of forming acquaintance, and comparing customs and doctrines, novelty will mislead

us. New things are often better than the old, and are sure to be more attractive. Broader thinking and broader acquaintance with men breaks up old habits of thought and feeling. The danger is, that in the process we may barter things of value for worthless matters. Here is where we need to be on our guard. In the increased light we cannot avoid discovering some mistakes. Some things which once seemed valuable we will see to be now of no account. There is a good deal of such rubbish. We must not attempt to hold on to effete things—must not refuse to make surrenders, or determine to hold on to things because they are old and have been long cherished. But no more must we be too ready to change. It is a bad habit to hold essentials loosely. There is such a thing as being too liberal. What the Christian world wants to-day is to be willing to welcome all *real* progress, to cast off all old-time fables and prejudices, and determine to know and receive the truth, following wheresoever it leads. But it must be supremely and unchangeably loyal to God and truth. It must refuse to be decoyed by blandishments and false lights. In the ratio of its liberality must be its unswervingness to whatever ought to be held and maintained. There must be no toleration of error, no compromise with wrong, no excuse for sin. We must dare to be as true as death—unflinchingly, sublimely loyal. We must not let our standard go down by default. Within the Christian camp are not a few enemies, some out-and-out traitors, a good many trimmers, who follow for spoil, a multitude who know nothing of what true Christianity means, who are all ready to sell out. The time is upon us when all such should be relegated to the rear, or put in the guard-house, and those who have the Christian name should have the courage and manliness to be true to

their great Captain. None but Christians must be sentinels to-day. Whoever pulls down the flag must be shot on the spot.

The great want, which in effect comprises all others, is a deep, genuine, all-pervading, God-given revival of religion; not the spawn of trick or art, but an outpouring of the Divine Spirit, which shall not be like an April rain, which fills the mountain torrents for a day; nor like a spring freshet, when, from the thaws of accumulated snows, the rivers overflow their banks, and the mighty flood goes booming to the sea, leaving only marks of desolation along its course; but a baptism of holy fire and love, of faith and zeal and holy power that shall penetrate and permeate our souls, and remain there, a godlike presence, to fructify for all time; a revival that shall permanently and radically sanctify the body; that shall not simply restore to us and perpetuate among us the ancient spirit which made our fathers the great power of God, but that shall make us more mighty than they. We ask not that it come in noise and tumult, or with external signs; but the master-want of Christendom to-day is a revival that will bring the Church from the childhood to the mature state, and present it unto her Lord a bride worthy of her spouse. And why not? If our Christianity is what we claim for it; if it is of God; if it is set up in the world by him; if it is the truth, simple, unadulterated; if it is God's best gift; if it is man's greatest boon; if it is the sure and only way to God; if it shows his will and helps men out of sin; if it answers all our questionings and opens heaven: then it is worthy of our supremest love and utter devotion, and ought to win our perfect and unswerving loyalty. If not this, it is a cheat, a fable, a snare. If we hold to it, let our loyalty be absolute—let us love it.

This will be the truest, grandest revival. Let Christians determine to be Christians, and carry out that determination in the pulpit and the pew, and speedily this whole world will be alive with the power which saves. But we speak specially to the great Methodist family: let the beginning of our second century be an occasion when we shall thoughtfully consider our duty, and when we shall renew our loyalty, and each in his place be found acting a worthy part. Our Church deserves it; our character demands it; our souls need it. It cannot fail to be commended of and pleasing to God. The whole world will feel its influence. If we will not, though we may think lightly of it, it will not be a light affair. We shall meet it in the hurt and sorrow that must come to our own homes and to our own souls.

It has been wisely arranged, no doubt, that the Church should formally celebrate our centennial. And those intrusted with the arranging of the plan have announced a programme. In addition to proper religious observances in all the churches, it has been planned that the year should be signalized by generous offerings of our substance to Christly benevolences. Special attention to the matter of cancelling all our church debts, so that we can enter our second century without a drag from the first. Certainly nothing could be more appropriate, or more likely to give our Zion a good God-speed. If it could be announced before the year closes that our debts are all paid, it would not only electrify our own ranks, but thrill all Christendom with delight. Let us not bequeath to the second century the vexatious financial burdens of the first.

The year should be marked with universal thank-offerings, in which every member and friend should come with suitable gifts, to some one or all of the objects named. The

poor and the rich should vie with each other. The poor should not be denied the pleasure, nor should they be permitted to outdo the rich, giving more out of their poverty than the rich do out of their abundance. There ought to be no Methodist of large means who will let this year pass without large and noble offerings. In this there should be a manly and Christian emulation. It would be pleasing to God, if we should surprise ourselves in the greatness of our gifts, and it would return to our souls in fertilizing springs of comfort and growth. The Church should not go out of the year until she had established her great educational enterprises and missionary efforts upon the most ample scale and enduring foundations, so that the fullest measure of her power may be exerted in all the earth. There ought to be no want of funds to meet every demand, at least until the tithe of the $1,000,000,000 out of our coffers should be laid upon the altars of the Church of our love. There could be no surer precursor to the outpouring of blessings upon us than the outpouring of our blessings on the work of the Church.

There are some among us who should come with their hundred thousand; many who should bring their tens of thousands; a still greater number who should come with their thousands; a vast multitude with their hundreds; half of the two millions of our Zion with their tens; and there should not be one among all our millions that should not in some way bring his offering of a few dollars for some one of the causes named as among our centennial beneficiaries. It would give new spring to our life and new inspiration to faith, if we could come with a devising which costs us some sacrifice; if we could come with our gift, baptizing it with prayers, and laying it on the Church's altar, with the inscription, *in the gift if*

not on it, "For the sake of our dear Church." Let the Methodist people arise and make the year memorable and glorious! God has permitted us to live this year; let us erect our Ebenezer. Come, legislators; come, judges; come, ye of the learned professions; come, merchants; come, manufacturers; come, artisans and mechanics; come, farmers; come, laborers; come, fathers, and mothers, and children; come, all. Crowd the altars of the great churches and of the small chapels, and fill the house of God with the fruits of your toil and earnings, and pray as you come for a new and mighty baptism on our dear Methodism. See if God, according to his ancient promise, will not open the windows of heaven, and pour out such blessings that there will not be room enough to contain them.

Out from the bosom of that hundred years now fled what events have sprung! how, in its progress, the whole face of the world has changed! its social status, its civil institutions, its mechanic arts, its industries, its civilization, its educational status, its religious ideas, its learning, its every thing that goes to make up a world's life and history! What strides of growth and advancement in all directions of welfare! We are filled with astonishment as we look back and call to mind what has come to pass in our time, in the last fifty years. Who, of all the millions that lived in the century's dawn, but who are now among the dead, dreamed of a tithe of the wonders we have lived to see? Not one! The sublime procession of impending events was then waiting—coming—even as it has marched forth; but it was not visible to mortal eyes. It struggled already in the womb, impatient of birth—but they knew it not. It is so ever! The present carries the future, and is full of prophecy, but our dull eyes cannot read the mystic inscriptions.

So with the century upon which we enter. It is not given to us to know what it will unfold. We see its dawn, the twilight of its iridescent morning, but its meridian and close lie hidden on the other side of the cloud. The glory of its revealings is reserved for our children, three generations away. That it will be wonderful we cannot doubt. That there are changes greater than any yet witnessed, impossible as it seems, is most probable — changes still more beneficent, we may hope. There will be more of knowledge; more humane feeling of man for his fellow-man; more justice tempered with mercy; more melioration of the sufferings of misfortune and poverty; less of cruelty and war; less of the oppression of the weak by the strong; less drudgery and degrading toil; womanhood will be delivered from the drudgery imposed by man; childhood will be reared with more care and tenderness; men will be more generous because more strong; civilization will take the place of barbarism, and will be more refined and pure and noble; the hidden treasures of nature will be brought forth; new forms of good and comfort will be discovered; machinery will relieve much of the severity of work; and man will have more time for reading and thought and the amenities which beautify and ennoble life; the superstition of ages will have disappeared; Christianity will be the reigning religion of the world; science will still further support the truth of revelation, and deeper knowledge will vindicate religion; the world will be better in all the elements of virtue and happiness than it is to-day. So we hope; so we believe.

Our own land a hundred years hence:—how think you of it? It almost takes one's breath to look forward! Two hundred millions will crowd its domain. They will come from all lands, the overflow of the old and crowded countries of

the globe. The English tongue and our free institutions will fuse them all into one. A dense population will cover the immense reaches from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Assimilated to American ideas and feelings, they will give new vigor to our national life, and firmness and formidableness to our power among the nations. So we hope; so we believe.

Brothers, we have come to a great day. The sixth millenniad is in its blossom, and maturing fruit. Backward rolls the long night of dark and troubled ages. Onward comes the morning radiant with blessing. The mountain tops are already aglow. A little on, and the vast globe will roll around in a sea of light, bathing earth and sky in the glory of the Lord.

You have heard the corn grow in the fields—the gentle rustle of eager life running along the tender fiber; you have heard the incoming of the tide as the sea rises upon the land; you have heard the great gales of spring chasing away the frosts and the snows. Hearken! do you not hear the low murmur of the coming age; the spirit-tread of its advancing hosts; the faint sweet note of its far-off but ever-nearing song, floating along the arches of the descending century—the songs and shouts of a redeemed and regenerated world. It is coming, brothers! It is in the promises, and nothing can stay it! The long, black wings of retreating night go hustling down the past; the rosy wings of morning come sweeping up the future; and the shouts of angels and of men usher the advancing day.

If in that great future we would occupy a worthy place, we must act a worthy part. More and more those only will be accorded honor among men who deserve it. The weak and irresolute will have no voice in the councils which control

the future. We are to determine what our position shall be. When the kingdom comes; when right and truth ascend the throne, as they will; when men get to be men, and the useless and unpitiful go down with the false and the harmful; nothing will preserve us but our ability to serve the interests of the advancing race. God has committed to us a great trust; he has given us a great power; he has put the millions into our hands to be molded and fashioned; he has given us the key-position in the crisis hour; he has made us the heart of the host—the hand of the right arm. America will determine the future of the world. From her will emanate the deciding factors. We ought to be chief among the determinating factors of America. It is not possible for others to deprive us of that position if we do not prove ourselves unworthy to hold it. The *winners will be the workers!* Methodists of America! I would not inspire you with the spirit of unholy rivalry, or stir you up with desire or ambition of ascendency or leadership; but in the name of your Lord I exhort you, emulate all; if you may, transcend all in the magnificent service you render humanity in the crucial time of its struggle! Let your voice be heard, loud and clear, ringing over the field in the thickest of the fight, and let your standard be seen steady and moving at the head of the advancing column! Let humanity learn to look for your colors, and to know that where they fly are truth and victory!*

* See Note F, and especially Note G.

Thoughts for the Pulpit.

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.—PHIL. iv, 8.

But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.—1 TIM. v, 8.

THOUGHTS FOR THE PULPIT.

IT has been the custom from the beginning, that at this hour the Bishop should address the Conference, through the class seeking admission, on some aspects of the office and work of the ministry. The custom is in such favor, and the address is accounted of so much importance, that its omission, it is believed, would be considered a grave neglect. The prime object of the address is, or ought to be, to renew our recollection of vows made, and of the solemn responsibilities under which we exercise our sacred office. Conformably to this custom, I desire to offer a few thoughts and advices which seem to me to be both timely and important. If in doing so I should occupy a little more time than usual, and should express myself with greater plainness on some points, I beg the Conference to believe that it will be because of profound conviction and of a sense of official responsibility, to be disloyal to which would render me both censurable and criminal in my own eyes, and, as I believe, in the eyes of God and his Church.

Before proceeding to the particular matter of the address, I beg to say a few words with relation to such cases as that on which the Conference has just acted. (The matter here referred to was the action of the Conference in excusing a brother for refusing to go to the work assigned him.)

You will all remember that among the vows which are registered against our names—against the name of every member of an Annual Conference in our whole Methodism, made deliberately, calmly, and presumably in good faith—is a vow that we will accept the work assigned us by the authori-

ties intrusted with the assignment; that we will obey those having the charge over us, cheerfully doing the work which, in their godly judgment, seems best. Failure to keep this vow, except for adequate providential reasons—such as impairment of health or unforeseen calamities of some kind, which render it practically impossible—is viewed as so great a fault, that it is classed among the grave immoralities: and in our Church order the delinquent is held to answer, as in the case of crimes which "exclude from the kingdom of grace and glory," and it is made the duty of his superior to proceed as in the case of crime. I suggest, whether it is wise administration in these times to excuse the presiding elder, charged with the responsibility in the case, for a plain and obvious neglect of duty? and, above all, whether it is wise to excuse the delinquent himself? The law was enacted as a necessary safeguard, demanded by our peculiar economy with regard to the pastorate, and to provide against the disintegrating tendencies of neglect, and especially rebellion, against church order. I pronounce no judgment in this particular case; but express the fear that there is a growing and dangerous tendency to pass by such infractions of the law, which ought to be checked. It is important that we should not be permitted to forget, or lose the sense of, the sacredness of our vows.

In this connection I will add yet another word touching a kindred evil, which, I think, is growing among us, and which, unchecked, bodes much trouble and sorrow: it is the matter of intermeddling, in an improper spirit, with respect to our work. It is of the very essence and genius of our calling and covenants that we are not, and will not be, self-seekers —will neither choose nor decline our assignments, but will accept, as of God, the order of the Church. All scheming

and self-seeking is in violation of the compact, in spirit and in fact. In express covenant we renounce all worldly aims and ambitions, all secular pursuits and plans for personal advancement. We agree to be assigned to a specific class of duties exclusively, and to pursue these with utter devotion of our entire time and powers, with no other end in view but the glory of God and the advancement of his Church in the earth, accepting such support as may be provided for us. We agree not to meddle or interfere for our personal promotion, or complain at hardships and sacrifices; this, if not in exact phrase, is the clear import and spirit of our covenant.

One single, high, commanding object moves us in our choice of this work: the call and command of God. I call attention to this now, that I may suggest whether there are not symptoms among us of alarming apostasy at this point. Have we been sacredly true to the covenant? Are there not observable among us practices wholly inconsistent therewith? and do not growing tendencies admonish of approaching danger? Are we not over-anxious and unbecomingly exercised about dignity and remunerativeness of position? There is a difference in the fields of labor as to comfort, honor, and temporal compensation; and, also, it must be admitted, as to opportunity of personal culture and broad and generous usefulness. These differences cannot fail to affect us. We are men, and cannot but feel the attraction of the superior positions. They appeal to our best qualities not less than to our unworthy impulses. We have families, and cannot, and ought not, to be unmindful of them. Thus our very virtues expose us to the most powerful temptations. Our chief danger comes from the fact that the lure seems innocent, and is answered by our best and manliest qualities. We need, therefore, to be specially on our guard. A prize awarded

on the ground of merit, or as the expression of unbiased appreciation, becomes a badge of honor; and, modestly enjoyed and worn, is a distinction which one may worthily prize: but, gained by trick, or even personal effort, is both ignobly held and unwisely bestowed. The aspiration after high position, kept within bound, may be even a praiseworthy stimulant; but when it is permitted to consent to the use of any other influence than that which springs spontaneously from recognized superior ability and fidelity, and which, unsolicited, leads those charged with the responsibility to recognize our fitness, is both improper and unworthy. All scheming and planning to secure such position on the ground of personal favor or for mere personal gratification, or an assumption of personal merit, should not be simply condemned, but deserves to be severely rebuked. It is to be feared that there are covert methods among us even more discreditable than open and direct solicitations, which must, in the nature of the case, always be confined to the few whose overweening vanity makes them insensible to shame, and the higher promptings of all manly and noble natures. I refer to secret combinations of self-seekers to advance each other's promotion by various base expedients, possible only to mean and selfish natures, such as procuring nominations for place by returning similar service, putting obstructions in the way of others in order to open positions for ourselves, and other things of the same kind. Take whatever form it may, self-seeking is a practical renunciation of our vows, and when indulged must undermine all manly self-respect, and tends to destroy both the confidence and esteem of all right-minded people. Once permitted to gain possession of us, all other things and considerations merge into the simple question, how shall the coveted end be reached? Plans are set into operation to prevent

worthy competitors from gaining the coveted place; misrepresentation is called to the aid of sinful ambition; and the point, if gained, is at the sacrifice of so much, that when reached it is a prize ignobly won and dishonorably held. The schemer may succeed in gaining a place, and by trick and conspiracy may keep himself in coveted conspicuity, but it will ultimately be at too great a cost, both to himself and the Church, the sanctity of whose pulpit his vanity and selfishness defile and disgrace. There is a worthy and noble ambition for saintly men, calculated to call out all their highest powers and develop every thing great in them; but it is too lofty to make self-seeking its method, or self-aggrandizement its objective point and end. It has a supreme goal. It seeks to make the most of one's self; to elaborate, to the highest degree, his all of faculty and power; to qualify himself for the place of largest demands and usefulness; to bring his riper manhood to its utmost perfection. It covets the highest gifts; would excel in all lines of useful endeavor; sees in God, and Christ, and human need, and salvation, something greater than self; and is absorbed in these, contented to be used in any way for the glory of the one and the accomplishment of the other, and ready to abide the awards of others rather than to think of self.

May I call attention to one other form of self-seeking which, I think, we all feel to be growing and assuming unhealthy proportions among us, which develops especially about the close of the quadrennial term? I need hardly say that I refer to the evil of "candidating" for the General Conference and for the official posts of the Church.

This is of the same general character as the evil already referred to, with some mitigations. It is not, perhaps, so directly a breach of vows either in letter or spirit, and so lacks

the worst elements of culpability; but, after all, its savor is bad, and its effect on character both blighting and corrupting. If less than a crime, it is yet both unbecoming and unwise, and unworthy of the sacred character we profess and the sacred office we hold. The whole Church has more than once been shocked at what has seemed, at times, to be a scramble for the most holy places. Any position so gained—whether in some coveted editorial chair, or some secretaryship or agency, or the still more sacred office of the episcopacy—is held in shame and dishonor. He who covets such posts, and stoops to arts to win them, proclaims himself unworthy of them, and introduces into the question facts of personal disqualification which ought to defeat his aspirations.

But, passing from these incidental matters, I come now to the more important subjects which it was in my thought to bring to your notice and lay upon your minds. I earnestly covet grace to speak suitably and impressively; and I crave your careful attention to what may be said, as well as your prayers for myself that I may be aided to say the very words which ought to be spoken, and in the spirit and manner that will make them, not merely most entertaining, but most useful.

If I succeed in carrying out my purpose, my thoughts will group themselves around these four points: By what authority are we ministers? For what end are we ministers? What are the requisites in our ministry to the accomplishment of the end proposed? Our responsibility for the manner in which we perform the duties our office involves and imposes. Or, comprising all in a single sentence, I wish to speak of the functions of our sacred office.

Returning to the order indicated, let us for a moment consider the point, By what authority are we ministers?

There is a very current impression that the ministry, like any other profession, is a self-chosen one, on which a man enters as he does into any business pursuit—choosing his field as suits his tastes and convenience, and purely on those considerations. It is not supposed to require any special convictions or motives other than those which govern a business transaction or the choice of a livelihood. That there are many in the ministry who have entered it on precisely such an understanding there can be no doubt; and it is hardly to be hoped that, despite our explicit teachings on the subject, our Church has none such in her pulpits. "By their fruits ye shall know them." When we find among us a man who is chiefly concerned about his own convenience and comfort, it is a straw.

There is a more respectable notion than this, but resembling it. In this case the ministry is not regarded as a business merely, selected on ordinary business considerations; but it is still self-chosen, with this difference, that it is chosen from a religious motive. This person sees in the ministry a means of doing good; he is interested in the results of such work; it accords with his tastes; he is willing to make sacrifices for the sake of the good he hopes to accomplish; so, on the whole, he chooses this work as his life-work in preference to any other. He recognizes the Church as a divine institution, and the ministry in some sort as a divine arrangement; and proposes, as his chief motive, the glory of God and the salvation of men. No man can pretend that such considerations are low or mean, or that a ministry exercised on such grounds is despicable. It is not strictly a secularity, or so much service for so much pay; nor yet a mere personal preference for reasons of taste or respectability; but it passes beyond this into a region of high and manly Christian endeavor from a Christian motive. It is presumable that many in

all the pulpits, including our own, could, in perfect candor, claim nothing more than this; and some that claim more, possibly, in the strictest truth, would not measure up even to this.

The view always held by our Church, and exacted in explicit terms of all who enter her ministry, is, that we exercise our ministry under a positive and direct divine commission; that God calls his ministers by the Holy Ghost speaking in them and to them; that he separates them and sets them apart to this work, and requires it of them. While it has never encouraged enthusiastic notions on the subject as to the external manner of the call, it has always demanded profound and clear inward convictions. It would refuse to admit to its pulpits any man, however gifted, who could not or would not say that he believed himself called of God to this holy work. The Church gives its sanction and authorization on the faith of this profession; and holy hands set him apart, not as one who has chosen the office for himself, or even as one chosen by the Church, but as chosen of God. Our ministry is by divine authority. As the Master chose his first apostles and preachers, and said to them, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature . . . and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world;" and as going, they went under his authority and not man's—so we claim that we exercise our office under a similar commission and by the same authority. We insist upon this, and herein is the ground of our confidence. We act and speak under authority and command of God. We have not set ourselves apart, and we claim nothing on our own account; but he has set us apart, and what we claim is, that we be heard as his embassadors. (2 Cor. v, 20.) Upon no other ground would we dare to exercise the ministry committed to

us. It is not of our seeking. We are aware that this is a great assumption. We know well what the statement implies, but we dare assume nothing less. It is because we so believe, that we have confidence in God that in any case, whatever trials may come and whatever opposition may rise up in our way, he who has sent us will keep his promise—will be with us to the end of the world, and will make his word prosper in the thing whereunto he sent it. (Matt. xxviii, 18–20; Rom. x, 15; Isa. lv, 9–13.) No one can truly feel this conviction without a deep religious consciousness underlying it, and without receiving, at the same time, a sense of the responsibility and of the dignity and worthiness which such a calling implies. It is well that we should be habitually under the sense that we do so profess, and are so commissioned. It will, at the same time, give grace and dignity to our character and tone and strength to our ministry; nor will it beget vanity or arrogance, as has been asserted. When you see a vaporing or ostentatious preacher, you may know that his soul has never been deeply touched with the sense of the divine commission, or with the awe-inspiring conviction that he is charged with the care of souls. Let us anew take the question home to our hearts, "Are we so sent?"

The next thing to which I desire your attention is this: For what—that is, to what end—are we made ministers?

With us the Church is a divine kingdom, and the ministry are divinely called to build it in the world; they are ministers of God to build the Church of God. The Church is not for them, but of them instrumentally. They are sent to quarry the living stones from the dead world to build its walls—stones made living by their handling. This is the one idea of their calling, and the one thing to which they

are called. It is a call to labor and service, but to a great and honorable labor and service—"to be workers together with God." Let us look for a moment more closely into the nature of this work. To build a divine kingdom—what does that imply? Much depends on the answer. It is not simply to organize men into a society, under certain rules and regulations according to prescribed formula; nor, yet more, is it simply to build into them certain doctrines, and separate them to the practice of prescribed ceremonies and rituals. It is, indeed, that; but all that is the merest incident—the wood, hay, and stubble. The fundamental work is to build men into God; to make a new and divine order of men, and of families, and of nations; a transformed and twice-born brotherhood; a community and communion that shall be the children of God, and that shall be worthy to be called by that sacred name; that in their faces and inmost life and outer conduct shall disclose and manifest their celestial birth—"a holy nation, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people." It is important that it should be fixed in our minds that this is our *sole* function. There should be nothing equivocal or uncertain here. The idea should be deep-cut, and ever present with us. We are sent to be builders of the world, or we are nothing, and an impertinence. No sublimer work was ever committed to mortals or angels. God himself has nothing nobler for his almighty love. We are simply workers together with him to realize his highest ideal. He puts upon us this highest honor. Am I putting too high an estimate on our calling? Any thing else or less is the sure guarantee of failure. You will observe that I have used two qualifying terms or phrases: "We are workers together with God"—we are *instrumental* workers. We are employed to work to a given end,

and the end is made to depend on us; but we are simply servitors to the end—the *agency* is not ours, it is divine. It is a power that works through us, and without which, and the right conditions in us for its effectual working, the end can never be reached. This, too, we must constantly bear in mind. The force which builds is the truth, and the Holy Ghost in the truth; we are but divinely constituted ducts of both, so we are instrumental builders. The thing to be kept steadily in mind is, the design for which we are ministers. The recollection of this will inspire, sustain, and guide our efforts. We will not then miss the mark by missing the aim. Herein, after all, lies the great source and danger of failure.

By remembering that we are sent, not to be builders of a cabal, or association, or society, or school of thought, or guild of some kind for mutual advantage and entertainment, or for mere personal culture and improvement, or for social gratification—that it is not our fame, or comfort, or promotion that is aimed at, or the pre-eminence of the name we blazon, but that we are set by the appointment of God to build humanity into its highest possible perfection of character and condition by lifting it into the participation of the life of God and into the fellowship of his thought, we shall be best able to catch the inspiration, and grasp the sublimity of our calling. Let us blazon this on our banner, so that the whole world shall see it, and so that it shall forever be before our own eyes, a sublime reminder of duty or a withering reprover of treachery and failure: "We are sent of God to build the everlasting kingdom." A ministry that cannot claim this, that acts not under the inspiration of this idea, that sees for itself a less function or a less authority, must lack the heroism and other qualities which alone can give sanctity

and sacredness to the men who bear it, or to the effect it produces. This or nothing; or if not that, this or hirelings.

This brings me to the third point to which I desire your attention: What are the requisites for the performance of this function? These may be considered under two aspects — personal and administrative — questions of the preacher and quality of the preaching. These will be determinative of the result. It requires built men to build men. The builders must use the appropriate tools with the skill of master workmen, or the result will be a botch and failure.

With regard to the person, an indispensable condition is, that God select him, and that he put his Spirit within him. Whatever qualities he may have, without these he cannot be a builder of God's house. God cannot choose an unholy channel for his Holy Spirit and for his grace. Whoever works with him must be animated and guided by him; must work in the spirit and to the end which determines him; must have a mind to build as he directs, in the way he prescribes, and on the foundation which he lays.

Personal ministerial character is so important an integer, that I beg to devote a moment longer at this point. He that teaches holiness must himself be holy. He that would move men toward holiness must himself be centered in holiness. The force that lifts men must be from above, and yet must be in the preacher. Confidence in the speaker, in his earnestness and honesty, must precede any profound impression of his words. People instinctively demand that religious teachers shall have the odor of sanctity about them. Nor is the semblance, however complete, sufficient. Souls have a way of knowing when souls speak to them. They infallibly discern between mere sound and the power which comes from the core of a great honest feeling. Out of the depths of the

soul come the forces that move to moral revolutions. There must be in the minister who would fill the function of his ministry the qualities of heart and mind that win confidence; the brave, generous, soulful qualities that make men feel that the speaker stands near to God, and is on intimate terms with him; that beget the feeling that he can be trusted and will be found faithful. Men will lend themselves to be amused by a wit, even though they know him to be a charlatan; they will give up their emotions to be played upon by a voice or a gesture, even when they are forewarned of the trick; they will go with the crowd to hear an orator for whom they have no respect, or they will even waste time in listening to speech that is the mere rant and vociferation of a contemptible ignoramus when they are conscious of the fact; but, after all, these are not the agents or agencies that work great changes in human lives, and reconstruct human character and human society. Out of such shallow caves come the winds which sometimes spread the surface of society with foam for an hour; but when continents are to be lifted, another kind of man is wanted. For his work the minister should be a man of the manliest qualities, of great-headed common sense, of great-hearted human sympathies, of broad and generous charity, of incorruptible integrity, of dauntless courage, and of holiest sanctity. These qualities lay the platform of a great and masterful power with and over the consciences he is to ply with the divine forces of the eternal truths he is deputed to preach. And when he speaks such truths, from such a platform, the kingdom will start and grow in the souls of men; from him will emanate the powers that build the world.

But sanctity of character, however important, is not the only requisite. It is a requisite. God demands it, and the

human soul demands it. It is a power; but alone it builds nothing to completeness. It is the one prerequisite to the builder which enables him to build.

This brings me to the second branch of requisites—requisites in the qualities of the preaching. Before speaking on this point let me remind you again that the kingdom is to be built out of the elements of the world; out of and into souls steeped in sin and worldliness; souls absolutely dead to all those aspirations and feelings which are to be built into them, so building them into God. Out of these dead souls the kingdom is to rise; out of these souls, deformed and marred by sin, it is to come forth in spiritual beauty and glory; life is to spring from death, beauty from deformity, purity from defilement; a divine kingdom, eternally filled and thrilled with God, is to be raised out of the base and polluted elements of depraved and fallen humanity.

To measure the magnitude and difficulty of the work, we must remember, also, that the elements of the kingdom are transitional. A single generation, and each generation in succession, sweeps away the entire fabric built by all preceding workers. The force must be equal to the demand to repair the wastes of mortality, and to extend and widen the empire. It is a vast work to preserve the Church in its integrity, but that is not sufficient; it must be broadened and deepened. It is not enough that it be maintained intact, it must transcend itself in every respect; must become a truer and diviner Church; must produce larger and better fruits; must build its walls wider and firmer; must go on to the occupancy of the world, to the overthrow of all false systems and all hiding-places of evil and wrong: must break every chain, and dry up all the fountains of curable human sorrow, before it can bring on the day of universal right-

eousness. But to accomplish this, preaching must be awakening and constructive; must move men to repentance for sin, and build them up in faith and holiness. If it be void of these qualities, the kingdom can never be built. They are a perpetual need. Observe that this is so, and why it is.

It must be an *awakening* ministry. But to be awakening it must be able to gain attention, and create respect for and interest in its deliverances. Here lies the first need. There may be places still where people attach respect to preaching simply as preaching, and where they will gladly hear the Gospel however poorly and by whomsoever preached, and where there are no impediments to be removed. But this is not the general fact, and with each rising of the sun will become less and less a fact. People will neither hear us nor receive our words as they once did. We must recognize this fact and the new demand it makes upon us, and we must fairly meet the demand. We can neither scold it down nor ignore it. The requirement must be met, or it will turn away from us with scorn and empty our churches. Men are busy with new questions; we must comprehend the temper of the times. They have distractions and doubts; they will be deaf to our entreaties and advices until they perceive that we understand their trouble and know how to deal with it. We can do nothing with or for them until we gain a cordial and interested hearing.

By what art shall we accomplish this? Let me emphasize the answer to this question negatively: Not, I would say most emphatically, by that weak and shallow trick of weak and shallow minds sometimes resorted to, of publishing our wares in sensational phrase and bulletin. In my judgment nothing in modern times has done more to weaken respect

for the pulpit and bring ministers into contempt than this species of charlatanry. The announcement of quaint titles and texts is a low art of a low mind, and proclaims the employer of it a religious mountebank in the estimation of sensible people. Nor, I would further emphasize, are we safe in seeking to gain attention by resorting to novelty of manner and method in our discourses—tricks of the comic or tragic stage, arts of oratory, pantomime, wit. These all, when introduced into the pulpit, reduce it to the level of a play-house, and the performer to the grade of a harlequin. They may succeed in drawing a crowd for a time, or even permanently, as a band of common minstrels or a clown does, and the ultimate effect will be substantially the same. The pulpit cannot afford such a strain. It must preserve its sanctity or it is nothing!

How, then, shall we arrest this surging crowd of immortals who will not voluntarily or spontaneously hear us? By what art shall we gain their attention long enough to impress them?

We have admitted that the times and temper of the people have changed. We emphasize it. The change affects the question of our gaining a hearing. We must recognize it. The hinderances are many and great. We cannot safely ignore them. Men are wonderfully busy these times. There never was such a rush for mammon. Two causes produce this mammonizing temper. The things wealth will buy make men eager to obtain it, and the rush of competition creates a larger demand on business energy and time. In the rush and scramble they have not time to hear us. Then, too, there has come an atmosphere of chilling doubt and reigning skepticism, the result of a process of reconstruction of thought which is going on. It has become fashionable to call in

question all old ideas and customs. The grip of religion has been loosened. Besides, there are new and numerous attractions, which did not formerly exist, which draw men away, and successfully compete with the pulpit. The newspaper, the play-house, the out-door recreation, the lecture hall, compete for the patronage of the spare hours from business. The air is full of voices. How shall we, amid this din and clamor, gain a hearing? How shall our voice tower up with such clearness and commanding authority, amid the uproar and confusion, as to hush the tumult and compel the dizzy, bewildered throng to listen? Hear it, minister of God! By no art or trick; vain are all such expedients to quell this mob of hungry and frenzied passion. The earthquake would hush them in a moment, the boom of the great guns of God would silence them into awe, could they be heard; but human tricks break and dance upon the surface of such billows, as straws are torn and twisted in the hurtling of the tempest. The art by which we can get a hearing, and the only, is the simple art of great, sincere, honest, manly speech, so freighted with God's eternal truth that it will come into their misplaced excitements like the booming of great guns from the hills of eternity.

But how can we do it? There is but one way. Have the soul full of God, and light, and conviction, and love for perishing men; and preach as for eternity—preach, not to please, or amuse, or pander to prejudice, or passion, or wealth, or fashion; but, with the inspiration of the thought that you are God's messenger, and that eternal destinies are to be affected by your words. Preach because you believe and feel the tremendous things of which you speak; preach with the idea that what you say is to help, possibly to save, some soul from death; with the feeling that you are affecting men and

women in their deepest interest forever. Go to your pulpits from your knees, with your soul on fire with great thoughts and great truths. Go, after you have done your utmost to find the mind of God—after you have grappled to your utmost powers with great questions—after you have endeavored to realize to yourself the solemnities of judgment and eternity! Go, remembering that there are hungry, aching souls waiting for your words; souls buffeted amid the billows of temptation; souls in the slough of despair and wilderness of doubt; souls waiting and watching, amid darkness and trouble, for light; souls looking this way and that for some helpful signal; souls waiting for a voice! There is all this in every congregation more or less to which you speak: young men in the breakers ready to perish, old men in fear, fathers and mothers in distress, hungry eyes looking to you from the pews! Go, remembering that the enemy is lying in wait at every corner, and setting his snare at every door! Go, with the vision of the drinking saloon, and the open doors to the dens of shame, and the whole array of the avenues of sin luring the unwary feet of youth. Go, with life and all its sorrow and earnestness and danger in your mind, and with death and judgment in your thoughts! Go, looking away, beyond death, into the awful realm of the future—its possibilities of glory and of shame! Go, with the feeling that you must save souls or die in the attempt!

Thus going, your voice will ring like a clarion in the din, and swell above the clamor of tongues like a bugle; and men will hear, and, catching the charm, will turn and listen; and they will come and come again, and will not weary of lips that speak such words. Let them see that you *mean* what you say; that you are not novices nor ignoramuses; that you are alive to the times; that you are capable to speak; that

you have wrestled with the difficulties which trouble them, and have mastered them; that you mean to be helpful to them and know how to be; that you are great-souled men and are earnest in your work: you will not want appreciating hearers.

Do not despise the heads of the people. Many of the hinderances you are to cope with lie in the region of the brain. You must be able to grapple with these. The only way to the heart is often through the head—it is always the safest way. Capture the mind, win the reason to your side, stop all the boastings of inflated pride and skepticism; and then, with conscience on your side, as it will always be, your case is clear. Hold the head and you will control the heart.

You will see by all this that you have a serious work on hand, which must lay under tribute your best powers. The work you are set to is too great to be achieved with a left hand. You cannot be idlers or hap-hazard in your plan. To build *men* you must yourselves *be* men. Men will attend when men speak. Let nobody suspect you of narrowness or the subterfuges of ignorance and insincerity. Have the courage which comes from real conviction, and the devotion which comes from a sense of the dignity and importance of your work. Do not depend on genius. Beware of the snare of fluency. Do not expect inspiration will supplement idleness. Lay yourself out for great endeavor. Work mind and heart to their utmost bent in preparation. Then cast yourself on God, and dare any thing to save souls. "Cry aloud, spare not;" and certain as God is God, your word will not be a mere fulmine. The plow will stop in the furrow, the anvil will wait for the hammer, the streets will empty themselves, and men will stand still to hear you. Mammon will let go

his grip, and doubt and indifference and dissipation will give way, and dead men will come out of their graves of sin to hear and ponder the great words which come from the furnace fires of an earnest heart and masterful mind. It is God that sends you; and if you are faithful, heaven and earth may pass away, but his word will not return to him void, but will prosper in the thing whereunto he sent it. Avoid platitudes; use plain Saxon; remember that flowers are blank cartridges or wreaths which dull the edge of your blade; deal heavy blows; go where the enemy is, and smite with mighty truths; dare to hunt him in his strongholds, but be certain of your ammunition and careful of your aim. It will soon come to be understood that your pulpit forges thunder-bolts, and men will hasten to see the combat, at the risk of being wounded themselves; nay, they will come that they may be wounded—killed and made alive again.

Having now gained attention, we must see to it that the truths which we preach, while meeting the reasonable demands of the intellect, shall rouse the conscience and move and win the heart. One thing must be gained: men must be made to feel their sins and sinfulness. They must be roused to a sense of guilt; they must be made to see the need of a Saviour; they must be pressed to decision now. The peril of delay must be pointed out; the way of safety must be made plain; God's mercy and willingness to save souls must be declared. All discussions and dissertations must look to immediate results. As under the old empire all roads pointed to Rome, so all your lines must point to the Cross. All possible appeals must be made with the pathos of earnestness and with the tenderness of love. The whole effort, whether addressed to the mind, to argue away its doubts; or the conscience, to awaken its rebukes; or the heart,

to move its fears or hopes, must have one end in view—to bring the sinner to his Saviour now.

Through the head we must go to the heart, and account the sermon lost that does not somehow storm that citadel. Having cleared the way, by massing our heaviest batteries against its strongholds, and bringing to bear against its almost impregnable defenses of sin the great guns of the divine law, (so silent in our pulpits these days,) we must capture the heart. One has said that the preaching of the law is one of the lost arts. We must restore it, and burnish the old blade, which in times past did such mighty execution upon the ranks of the King's enemies: but we must preach it better than our fathers did. Nor must we forget the mightier power of love. Calvary must be more prominent than Sinai. The thunder and fierce glare of the one must be tempered with the sweet and gentle radiance of the other; the stern justice of the avenging Sovereign must go hand in hand with the pathetic tenderness of the loving Father; the harsh notes of warning must mingle with the persuasive tones of entreaty and compassion; appeals to fear must not supersede the stronger and more constant and more cogent appeal to gratitude and hope and love. If we may not omit the terrors of judgment and coming doom of an endless hell, much more must we seek to attract by the glory of the immortal heaven held forth to hope and faith. The great awakener is the simple but awful and sublime truth of our guilt and danger, and of God's almighty love and grace; man's soul, its possibilities of good, its exposures to evil; eternity, with its awful significance. While men are men, these things must move them more profoundly than any other possible subjects of thought. The conscience, the affections, the fears, the hopes, the imagination, the reason itself, all feel their mighty

spell. We must be faithful to these motors, and apply them in all our sermons with tenderness, but with emphasis.

But you say, "I am not a revival preacher. I have no gifts of that kind." This kind of remark may have one of several paternities. No doubt in some cases it represents modesty—sometimes it is an affectation of modesty—but more frequently it means simply, "I have no taste for that kind of work." In some cases, no doubt, it represents a real feeling, and possibly a positive regret. And it must be admitted that all do not possess some natural or acquired qualities which are most available for that kind of work. It is even possible that some could not be useful in that way, with any amount of desire or effort. They are peculiarly fitted for other kinds of service: for instruction, for gentle, equable influence, for the guidance and edification of the Church. There is a diversity of gifts, each useful, and each serving a special function for the building up and compacting of the body. Nor is it ever right for one either to envy another his peculiar gifts, or to depreciate them. Let each serve to his utmost ability in his own peculiar way, so that it is the best he can do. But are you sure that you lack this gift of awakening power? Or may you not have unconsciously fallen into one of many snares which the adversary has spread about this point? There is, no doubt, quite a current feeling that this kind of work requires not only a peculiar, but a less respectable, kind of talent. May you not unwittingly have come upon it? Or, if not that, may you not have associated the idea of revival work with some extravagances which are disrelishable to your tastes, and so have come to an unwillingness to labor for such a result? Or may you not have fallen into the habit of not looking for fruits, and of not gathering the results of your minis-

terial work? I cannot doubt that many pass through years of their ministry without seeing any visible effects from one or other of these reasons, rather than because God has withheld from them the requisite gifts. They might possibly have brought many sheaves into the garner, but that they have been prevented gathering them by one of these snares. So much that is objectionable to good taste and delicate sensibilities often occurs in the manner of conducting revival services, that it is not to be wondered at that sensible and refined people rather recoil at the thought of them than desire them; and a minister of the same kind of organization and refinement experiences the same kind of recoil; and then, for the same reason, there is an honest doubt whether the average revival does not at last do more harm than good, while there can be no reasonable doubt at all that many so-called extensive revivals are disastrous. Some are saved, but more are unfavorably impressed. Now, what, under the circumstances, is the plain duty of the minister? Can he, therefore, give up the idea of awakening men, and as many of them as possible? Surely not. Such a course would soon bring the Church to an end. He must simply proceed, with all the power God has given him, in a legitimate and sensible method, to warn, entreat, and rouse his hearers to accept the invitations of the Gospel and be saved, and when his awakening appeals have produced their proper effect, he must, in every proper way, guide the awakened and penitent soul to his Saviour in the most direct manner possible. He is responsible for seeing that no improper methods, or hurtful and disreputable excitements, be permitted in the services of his Church: he is not called upon to resort to exceptionable methods. He may, and ought to, multiply means when there are signs that it would

be useful. It is his business to observe and know the symptoms in his congregation, and to be governed by them in the matter and method of his work. His duty is plain and simple—to preach the whole word of God in the most effective way possible to him, and garner the results with the most anxious and constant care.

The question about stated revival meetings has become one of such importance that I desire still further to call attention to it. What is the duty of a minister with regard to special revival effort? Thus far I have endeavored to show what ought to be the habitual aim and method of preaching. When faithfully carried out, the Church will constantly feel its power. There will be constant signs of life. Each sermon will bear fruit. The watchful and earnest pastor will be garnering his sheaves each month the year round. That, with the constantly vigilant pastor, I have no doubt is the most wholesome condition for the Church. It is the thing to be aimed at. But even then there may come seasons for special efforts, when the Church and minister should rally all their power for wider immediate results. The Church, through all her history, has recognized such seasons of special effort as legitimate, and has reaped great harvests from them. But the matter is one of great delicacy and danger, and requires good judgment, as well as most conscientious and religious handling. It is an easy thing to be moved by false motion, and to kindle a blaze with false fire. A perfunctory revival has in it the bad elements of every thing that is false. When the minister and people feel special hunger after God—when their souls are intensely drawn out for sinners—when there are signs of deeper attention—when the Gospel is producing marked effects—(and for all these the Church should constantly pray and the minister

constantly labor,) then let increased efforts be made, let the sermons, exhortations, and prayers be intensified and multiplied, but even then let all the services be earnest and decorous, without aiming at novelty or extravagance. When God pours out his Spirit, and real power appears among the people, there is but little danger of unseemly things occurring in the house of God, or incongruous with the most holy and sacred services. Crowds will gather—there will be some unusual excitement—firm hearts will be broken and smitten hearts will be healed, and many will change their course of life—but there will be nothing to offend the best taste. When the method is right and the power is from above there is no danger. All the harm comes from man-made revivals; from the arts and tricks which get up false excitements, when in many cases, as we have reason to fear, the influence is more human or diabolical than divine.

What about the employment of outside helpers? This has become a real question among us. There can be no doubt that it is profitable for pastors, in the ordinary routine of their work, occasionally to exchange with neighboring pastors; and to introduce to their pulpits other ministers of our own or sister denominations, with proper care that the invited or admitted visitor be a man of unimpeachable record. No other, under any circumstances, should be admitted to our pulpits. Too much care cannot be observed to protect both the sanctity and dignity of the sacred desk. No stranger unaccredited should be allowed therein. When a season of special interest appears, and there is an increase of services, it is proper to call in some neighboring pastor or ministerial helper. If care is taken to secure the right kind of aid, this is almost certain to help. But not every one will be a help. The greatest care and wisdom should be exer-

cised, and the pastor himself should in all cases keep steady hold of the reins. No one, unless under extraordinary circumstances, should be permitted to take his place. Both for present and future effect the Church and the converts must recognize him as the leader and responsible head of the work, must look to him for guidance and direction, must respect his authority. He must feel that he is absolutely responsible for what is done, and must, therefore, allow no one to supersede him. This will strengthen and establish his influence in the matter of husbanding the results. He should see to not only the ordering of the services, but should do much of the praying, exhortation, and preaching himself. But in all this he should be careful to keep close to his own Church, and give them to feel joint care and responsibility with himself, while recognizing his authority. He should exercise supreme watchfulness to prevent all wild-fire and all improper words and acts in his public services. A revival so conducted will be a lasting good, will leave the body healthy and sound, and will bring many into the kingdom who will abide in and strengthen the Church.

What about evangelists? There are, no doubt, some true and useful evangelists. But the greatest care should be observed in employing them, and precisely similar rules should be observed in inviting them as are above stated. Professional evangelists should never be invited to get up a revival. When invited, it should be to work with and under the pastor, and should be because there are signs that God is working among the people. He should not be permitted to introduce eccentricities and extravagances, which are evidently intended for sensational effect. No evangelist not well known and well accredited in his own Church, and well commended by his work, should ever be employed. A man

who advertises himself as an evangelist, and drives his vocation as a business, giving prominence to money considerations, and requiring the pastor to surrender his church into his hands, and adopting exceptional methods, should be treated as a charlatan and fraud, and find no favor among us. The employment of roaming religious mendicants should be considered a gross offense against decency and proper church order, and the offender ought to be held to answer to his conference.

We must rescue revival work, which has always held such an important place in the Church, and especially in our own Church, from the disgrace into which it threatens to fall, and has, in some cases, fallen, by giving to it our best care, and imparting to it breadth, earnestness, depth, and dignity. It is our business and duty to awaken dead souls. We must court the gift. We must cultivate the holy art. We must eschew every counterfeit. We must not only not contribute to shams, but we must prevent them. A true revival is a great blessing to a Church, not only ministering comfort and joy to it, but imparting to it strength and dignity and tone. It is a blessing to the community, reforming and transforming it; it is a blessing to our homes, deepening the religion of the household and saving our children. A spurious and shallow excitement is a manifold curse. More and more we must keep the holy fires burning, and with still greater vigilance we must set our faces against all false fires. The Church can endure any strain that may come upon her from without if she be preserved whole and pure within; but false methods, unsound doctrine, and superficial experience, if tolerated, must, soon or late, mar her beauty and destroy her power. Pastoral diligence and holy earnestness is God's method, and will not fail to bring out the full measure of

her strength. Let us discard every other trust, and remembering our high vocation as builders of the kingdom, let us be unintermittent in our efforts, expecting and seeking the blessing of God on each sermon, and a living interest in all the services of the Church throughout the year, gathering as we go from month to month the fruits of our toil. The result will be better in the end, and thus, doing our duty with fidelity, there will come down upon us, whenever needed, glorious reviving showers, which will not be followed by fatal ebbings. The one thing is to cultivate the habit of working for immediate fruit and the habit of garnering the results.

It is not enough that our sermons be awakening, indispensable as that is. If there are some who commit the mistake of supposing they can be ministers without convincing and awakening, or while leaving that quality out of their sermons, there are doubtless some who make that quality so prominent as to omit every other. When they have brought a sinner to repentance they consider their work done. Henceforth they leave him to grow as the "wild ass's colt," to become what chance and natural bent may make him ; or, if they give him any hint, it is so inadequate, and often so misleading, that nothing might almost be as well. They are told that they must go to church, they must pray, they must keep from gross sins, they must keep their emotions in a lively condition, then all will be well—they will grow in grace, and fill up the measure of Christian life and duty. Occasionally their attention is called to special duties. Now all this is well, but it falls far short of adequate pastoral instruction, and under it a Church can never become a fully developed Church. The tendency of such defective teaching is to produce dwarf Christians. The same result occurs

when too much account is made of what is called religious enjoyment. Many Christians, whole communities of Christians, are left to infer that the whole function of the Church is to minister to their enjoyment—that the sermon is for this—that if it fails at this point its hearing was time misspent. It matters nothing how shallow, if it stirs their emotions. It may contain no instruction; but if, in tone or incident, it makes them feel comfortable or elicits a tear, it is accounted great, and marks the day a red-letter day.

There are some that fall even lower than this in their estimate of what a sermon ought to be. With them it is merely a faultless composition, or a jingle of euphonies or beautiful pictures, or rich and learned discourse, or fine wit, or any thing to pass the hour pleasantly away and leave the congregation in an admiring state of mind, pleased with themselves, pleased with their church, pleased with the preacher, pleased with every thing. The preacher is popular, the congregation is delighted, the house is overflowing. What more ought a sermon to be expected to accomplish? Is it any wonder that Churches are weak and Christianity turned into doubt and ridicule when people are fed on such wind and husks, and have so little brain that they think it bread? Even children can *endure* milk; but what are those who are fed on the foam of rose-water, and cannot even endure that, if not sweetened with compliment and flattery. Pretty sermons, exquisite passages uttered to rapturous pews, without a thought or a word to stir the conscience or awaken reflection; with nothing of God, or eternity, or duty, or earnest work, or any thing else to guide manhood amid the breakers to noble character and worthy deeds — O prostituted pulpit! O profaned temple of God! O imbecile venders of bubbles and trinkets to abused though oft-

admiring pews! how long shall such infamy be possible under the sacred guise of religion?

It is in whole a product of a failure to conceive what preaching is for. A moment's thought of the true end for which God established it would crimson with shame the audience who would willingly listen, and the hireling who should vend, such petty impertinences in the temple of God as preaching. If the thought should dawn on him in the midst of his despicable performances, "Why am I here?" and he should see himself as God sees him, it would smite him with dumbness! It is sometimes said the pulpit has lost its power. It is a marvel that it has not! What it has suffered from pretty nothings and bombastic, pompous stupidity and heartless twaddle, would have sunk it beneath contempt were it not that, despite all this, it is divine; and though intermittently, and with many obstructions, the stream—often colored with the impurities of earthly pools and morasses—still flows from beneath the throne. But there is still enough of true preaching to make the pulpit a fountain of life to the world, and enough great, earnest, conscientious men in the pulpit who appreciate the dignity and demands of their calling to preserve the Church from dishonor and decay.

We come now to inquire into the qualities needed for constructing and compacting the body. If souls, awakened, grew spontaneously into fullness of grace and Christian character, we might give ourselves no further concern about them. Having started them on the way, we might safely leave them to themselves to prosecute the remainder of their journey. But I need not say that this is not the case. Our work is then but begun. If not the most important part, still not a less important part, remains. The birth of the infant is the first stage of the man, but it is not manhood. Our function

is to build men. Two things are needed to that end: to remove things which obstruct growth, and to contribute that which promotes growth. Let us consider those separately.

First, we must remove obstructions. It is true that when a soul is divinely awakened and converted—born from above—it becomes possessed of a new principle of life. And where there is life the natural order is growth—growth from the germ to the full corn in the ear, or to perfection. But growth, even, has its conditions: there must be no obstructions—there must be nourishment. We are set to posit life in the dead souls, and then to guard it and minister nutrition to it, that the life may grow to perfection. The truth by which souls are begotten must still be the aliment by which souls grow: born of the truth, they must be fashioned by it. The quality of the food will determine the quality of the development. We are largely responsible for the spiritual status of the Church; it becomes what we make it; is dwarfed or grows into beauty and power through us. Changing the figure, we are guardians and keepers of the flock. We are set to keep away destructive wolves that would destroy it, and to lead it forth into living pastures. We are responsible for its safety and for its healthful keeping.

The Church is peculiarly, distinctively, the people of the King. Its duty is not limited to the preaching of the Gospel, to the communion of saints, and the winning of souls. These it ought to do and must do; but there are other things that should not be left undone. Christ reigns in and through the Church, and the Church in him. Wherever the battle is waged between him and his enemies, there the Church should appear in the contest. She should furnish the thinkers who can defend the truth in the arena of

thought. She should be masterful in the power of trained intellect. She should see that her own leaders are foremost in knowledge. She should lead the world in benevolent enterprise. Hers should be the schools, hers the enterprise, hers the benevolence, hers the inspiration and the heroism which lead the march of progress, and give to the world the true and practical interpretation of the anthem with which the angelic host celebrated the birth of our King: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

We are set for the defense of the kingdom. Nor is this a small part of our calling. It is, and always has been, and always will be, beleagured by active and powerful enemies, who are intent on its destruction. They are fecund of inventions against it; they are forever sapping and mining about its walls; they will, if possible, overthrow the faith of the very elect. We have taught them doubt; we have trained them to questionings. They come forth to meet us with learned argument; they quote science against us; they decry our facts; they point to our mistakes; they are bold and defiant. We must meet them. We must deal with their objections with fairness. They have learning; we must meet them with superior learning. We must be able to evince the reasonableness of our faith against all comers. We must answer their questionings. We have reached a time when nothing will abide which cannot be rationally defended. The reign of authority is forever past. The question will never again be, "Who says it?" but, "Why does he say it?" We must be able to adduce the sufficient why. We must champion truth, and not dogmas or traditions. To be equal to the demand, we must be men of broad and accurate knowledge, and have the fashion of close and consequent

thinking, and clear and intelligible utterance. We must be able to separate the dross from the gold, and clearly to discern what things should be taught, and why they should be taught. Our sermons must be trenchant and convincing, so as to dispel doubt and command assent. The pulpit must be respectable in order to command respect. We must avoid the folly of setting ourselves against science, and of decrying it, and the greater folly of speaking of matters of which we know nothing. Become masters, and it will appear that you are such. Your calling requires that you should be teachers; teachers of the deepest things; teachers of the foolish and the learned. You are nothing if you are not teachers. You must, therefore, be able to teach. You must be broad enough to know the age, to understand what it is thinking about, what the perplexities of mind are, what the real wants and troubles are that embarrass your congregation, the young and the old; and you must be deep enough to give relief. Let us settle it once for all, that we have come to an age when men will no longer hear us if we be not competent to instruct and help them. Even the loyalty of the Church will not long endure the strain of imbecility in its pulpit. Fools and quacks will have to go to some other market to vend their wares. With its eternal truth, its vast and mighty themes, its divine authority, its close and profound relations to the deepest welfare of men, its infinite motives, the grandeur of its mission, the pulpit ought to be the greatest fulcrum in the world, the mightiest lever; ought to move men more profoundly, and lift them into loftier sublimities, than any other agency on earth. It can be nothing less than a reproach if its sermons be not grand and mighty speech, worthy of fully developed men, and worthy to be heard by such.

But, passing from this point, I come now to consider the sermon as a means of spiritual culture. After repelling assaults and throwing up ramparts of defense against enemies, the pulpit must furnish the kind of stimulant and instruction that will develop the grandest type of Christian character. In order to this it must be ribbed and buttressed with strong, wholesome doctrine. It is good for the mind to be fortified with sound doctrine. There is too little doctrinal preaching in these times. Both the mental and moral life profit by the tonic and ozone of strong diet. It creates tissue and develops manly strength and ruggedness. It is possible to continue milk diet too long, and protract the baby state on into the years of manhood, which is monstrous. Meat is better for muscle, and men want muscle. It is a good thing to grapple with great questions, and wholesome to have strong convictions founded on strong reasons. The doctrines of revelation are God's prepared diet for souls. They are also the ladders of truth on which we climb into the higher and purer spiritual atmospheres. If we would have strong Christians we must make much of doctrines. It is sometimes said that people do not like doctrinal preaching, and the word says, "The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine." Must we, therefore, omit the preaching of the truth? Every thing depends on the manner of doctrinal preaching. If dry and dull, people will not like it. But why should it be dry and dull? It is God's truth, that ought to set us on fire in the unfolding of it; and if we are on fire the people will be. I believe there is at present a special demand that we should return to the old paths in this particular. It is the right, as it is the interest, of our people that they should be taught the whole mind of God; that they should be led to the heights of the grandest

and to the depths of the profoundest truths. It will be, that, by seeing God in his thought and plan, they will come to think and feel like God. The vision will transform them. "Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord," they will be "changed into the same image from glory to glory." The struggle with and effort to grasp great truths makes great souls. Men grow broader and deeper in proportion to the truths they take into them. Mere sentiment engenders feebleness. A sense of ignorance, where there ought to be knowledge, produces not only the feeling of shame, but uncertainty and insecurity. Intelligent conviction is the best security against fickleness. The best habit of the soul is the habit of hunger after truth and the relish of the truth. We must create that habit by making much of truth, and by so studying it ourselves that we can present it with clearness and attractiveness to the people; so fed, they will grow strong and shapely in the house of God. This does not mean that we are to be bigots, or narrow; but simply that we are to find out what truth is and teach it in its truest forms. We must learn the art of fascinating our congregations with robust, manly discourse, and raise them into an atmosphere where dilettanteism and mere sentimentalism will be an offense and disgust; which means simply that we must learn the art of thinking truth clearly and speaking it forcibly; or, better yet, the art of feeling the inspiration of the truth, the love of it, and of making others feel as we do. Two words contain it all—all the mystery of securing the attention of people—earnestness, masterfulness.

But our work is not yet done. We work for an end; we must still keep that in mind. We work to build the kingdom. We must not only awaken men, guide them to

the Saviour, bring them into the kingdom, ward off their enemies, and ground them in truth of right thinking and doctrines; but we must show them what they are to do and how to do it, and inspire them to do it. This is quite as important as any part of our work. We must be careful to show them that religion does not mean simply, or chiefly, belief in certain doctrines, or loyalty to churchly order, or personal enjoyment, or great professions, or a narrow round of formal duties. Here has been all along an evil among us. We must more and more show them that it means work; or, better yet, that it means the truest and most magnificent manhood, built into the grandest and most magnificent life—means *being* and *doing*. God demands that his children shall be royal children. We must point out and insist on all manly virtues; a real, rugged character, into which is taken every thing that is excellent, and from which is excluded all that is low and narrow and mean and selfish. We must constantly hold up the ideal, until its image shall burn itself into the souls of the people, as the synonym of Christian. If our teachings and our Christianity do not produce the grandest sort of men and women in all elements of nobility they fall short of their work, and proclaim something wanting. A Christian rightly made—made according to the pattern of the truth, which we are set to preach—must be anywhere and every-where the manliest of men: true to the core; honest as death; faithful, brave; a light in the home, in the market, at the hustings, every-where, as much as in the house of God on the holy day.

We must teach the art of making ideal homes: homes where love reigns—homes where fathers and mothers understand the responsibilities they have assumed to themselves in becoming parents; where children shall be trained in honor

and virtue; where education and refinement and piety shall be conspicuous; out of which shall go worthy wives and citizens; homes where the mind is recognized as well as the body; where the soul is provided for as carefully as the stomach; where along with the work and toil, cheerfully borne, there is the elixir of high hope and divine aspiration; homes that have a celestial light shining in them, and a divine order and radiance about them. Christian fathers must be taught to be something else than mere toilers, and Christian mothers something else than drudges. There is a better way.

We must be more faithful in teaching the duties of stewardship—in other words, the ideal of right living. Perhaps the greatest failure has been at this point. The religion we have taught has been separated too much from the common every-day life—a religion for the sanctuary and the sabbath, the closet and the prayer-meeting. It would be false to the truth to say that such a religion is of no good, or such teaching of no value; but truth requires us to say, that it is inadequate, and if not misleading, at least falls far short of the mark. Our function is to build the whole life after the divine idea; to take youth at its threshold and teach it how to grow in symmetry and beauty; to teach it the lessons of early piety, of dutifulness to parents, and of respect for age and things sacred; to inculcate industry and sobriety, studiousness and strict moral deportment; to point out the snares and dangers which beset it, and to win it by kindness and gentleness to the closest confidence and reverent respect. Whoever is successful in building men must have the art of beginning with childhood. We must learn the potency of polite and cordial manners, and the winningness of generous and gentle words and well-timed speech. To do this nothing is like sincerity and genuine earnestness and affec-

tion; nothing so fatal as moroseness and ill-judged severity, or sanctimoniousness. Study the art of bringing the children of the Church into the kingdom. Do not depend on the sabbath-school. It will do much, but it cannot do your work. God has made you keeper of the souls of the children, and will hold you responsible for the charge.

But your chief function is with the fathers and mothers and grown-up people. Here you need the utmost skill and energy. The burden of your work is to point out to them the way, and teach them the art, and make them fall in love with the theory, of right living. No one dare speak to them as you dare, no one can lead them as you can. You need to be wise in employing this power. God has set you over them as overseers, not masters, to instruct, admonish, comfort, exhort, and persuade with all sympathy and long-suffering. They have the right as well as the need to look to you for guidance in all matters that pertain to duty and spiritual culture, that they may be perfect and thoroughly furnished to every good word and work. They must be educated out of selfishness into philanthropy, and charity, and broad-minded benevolence; must be made to feel that they are not their own masters as to the use of their influence, or time, or talent, or money, or any thing they possess; but that One is their Master in heaven. They must be taught that they are not here simply to serve themselves and their own, but to feel a brother's care and sympathy for all God's children; they must be taught to look upon it not as a burden but a joy to be accounted worthy to share in helping the needy, "to take joyfully the spoiling of their goods;" must be taught that industry and thrift and wise forethought about money getting is a Christian duty, because money increases their power for good; must be taught not

to hoard it for selfish ends, but to use it wisely in doing good; must be taught that to do good is the chief end of life; must be taught to be on the alert, looking out where they can contribute counsel, or influence, or money for the help of the needy and furtherance of the right; must be taught not to wait for opportunities nor to shirk opportunities, but to hunt them out for the most heroic and valorous duties and self-sacrifice; must be taught that the Church is not an alien, but a part of the divine order for this life, as much as the farm, or store, or profession, or home is; that it is the highest and most important part of all their blessings, and should have their first and most loving and faithful care.

All this you will see and feel implies much, but it still falls short of exhausting your function as builders of the kingdom. You are not simply preachers and priests, you are pastors. That implies discipline and watchcare; the careful looking after the erring and straying, the stimulating of the drooping and laggard, and the helping of the halting in all private ways of instruction. If the work seems almost formidable, you have only to remember always what it is for and who has appointed you to this office, and the greatness of the result if you are faithful. You are set to build the divine kingdom—to build men. You are working for eternity. The fruits of your toil are not to appear only here or chiefly here, but yonder, in the immortal ages. They are to appear here indeed, in the making of a glorious Church; in the making of the truest and noblest men and women; in the making of beautiful homes; in the making of the grandest humanity; in building upon earth a glorious civilization —a celestial kingdom: but your chief work is to appear in the beyond, in the everlasting ages, when the trophies of your toil are crowned, and afterward as they progress in eternal

glory. Keep in mind the end of all your labor: this will stimulate to high endeavor, and the use of the right means, and will save you from growing weary in well-doing, or from resorting to low subterfuges, or from content with imperfect results. Let us gird ourselves anew for the great work, and resolve on having a great Church of the living God; not a drove of camp followers merely, nor an ambulance army that cannot be depended on when God counts up his host against his enemies, nor that need to be carried and held up lest they grow tired, or cowardly, or traitors by the way: not such, but a glorious host of God's elect who shall snuff the battle afar off; who, armed with the panoply divine, shall be seen in the thick of the fray with their banners uplift ever; who shall stand, like the beaten anvil to the stroke, in the stormiest and darkest times; who shall be sublime every-where—in honor and dishonor, in peril and in triumph, at home, in the market, at the hustings, when alone, when in the crowd—always a glorious host of redeemed and regenerate souls.

How can we accomplish this? Not in our own strength. We must have God with us and we must have God in us. We must be sublime men and we must be divine men. We must live above the world, above its petty ambitions—in an atmosphere of heavenly thought and heavenly feeling and heavenly motion. We must be studious of all knowledge; we must be rich in truth and robust in devotion; utter and entire in consecration to our work. Thus panoplied, though men, we shall be more than mere men; Eternal Power will be with us and in us, and men shall know it, and the great work will go forward, until the world is filled with God and his kingdom shall possess the earth. We build our part to-day, and lay down the trowel. Some other will take it up and build on us. Let us see to it that our part in the wall is well laid in

beauty and in strength; that when the Master-builder returns to inspect our work we may hear him say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord." It has been well said, "The enemies of the Messiah's kingdom are yet many, and great conquests are yet to be made before his kingship shall be universally acknowledged. Our duty points to the field of strife, to the conflict with every form of evil, to the grand endeavors of the Church militant to conquer the world for Christ, to the avenues of mercy open on every hand. If our religion is restricted by a narrow conception of what Christ requires—if we think only of his precepts, our personal redemption through his blood, or the joys of spiritual communion—if, in short, we rejoice in him as our Saviour and not as our King—we shall fail to realize the nature and extent of our obligations, and be but poor servants in his cause. Our first individual duty is entire devotion to the will and service of Him whom we invite to reign in and rule over us. This rule is never more complete than our consecration; indeed, it is fearfully impaired by slight disobedience: we cannot serve two masters and be loyal to either. Our second duty is, to make the most of ourselves according to the opportunities that God gives us, that our service may be as broad, as varied, and as effective as it is possible to make it.

"It is matter of just regret when men highly endowed, liberally educated, and inducted into positions of responsibility, so err in their methods and aims that nothing worthy or enduring is accomplished. And certainly no position is higher or more responsible than the Christian ministry, since none involves interests so momentous, or power so stupendous or beneficent. The ministry is a primary and indis-

pensable agency of Christianity, the leading and aggressive force which unites and conserves all others. The human agency is exalted beyond conception by its association with a divine co-efficient. But still the highest grade and attainment of the human agent is no less essential to the highest power and success. Good natural abilities and gifts are indispensable; early training and scholarship are a powerful auxiliary; but intellectual weight and pulpit effectiveness are within the reach of all who can lay any valid claim to a divine call. Aside from a thorough spiritual foundation, intellectual grip, and judicious toil, success in the ministry will depend upon the special pulpit power which a man attains. This confers weight and respectability upon all his other offices and functions. And the pulpit requires for its vindication as the prime agency in the maintenance and growth of Christianity, what has been defined or comprehended as *fortiter in re* and *suaviter in modo*, or *strength of discourse* and *grace of delivery*. But a class of ministers aim at a *tertium quid* —a third something, which may be defined as *suaviter in re*—a supreme attempt to say agreeable and pleasing things. Sometimes it is manifested in such profusion of imagery as obscures the thought; sometimes in the lighter graces of diction, such as alliteration, antithesis, or in a mere studied cadence and modulation. It is not difficult to designate men who have had every opportunity to become strong and opulent in the pulpit, and who gave early promise of the highest ability, who have lost their grasp of thought and personal power by frittering away their energies in such little frivolities. We need the men to stand abreast the age, and to hold the centers of intellectual activity. Because some men of prominence have accepted the enthusiastic applause of the superficial crowd, in aiming at 'filling the church,'

rather than reaching the intelligent few, and holding the masses through them as a medium. The Gospel in its simplicity, fullness, and entirety will hold intelligent men if its principles are expounded and demonstrated, but if worked up into rhetorical bubbles it is not edifying. Such men may "draw;" but they do not draw to Christ.

"But there is another extreme to be avoided. Some able preachers exclude themselves from our best pulpits for the lack of grace. Their sermons are baldly plain. Their manner is abrupt, heavy, or uncouth. Their pronunciation is antiquated, or their illustrations commonplace. They are too demonstrative or too prolix. Such men need to investigate the occasion of that unpopularity of which they are so conscious and so impatient. But that men may be strong and successful ministers with very little conventional polish, many of the older ministers were a living demonstration. Some of them, who left the farm or the shop at eighteen to enter the itinerancy, became editors, college presidents, or famous preachers. But they had intense earnestness and indomitable perseverance; and for the rest, piety and good judgment sufficed, with such knowledge as they could compass.

"We must not, however, despise the emotions. There are two extremes to be avoided: On the one hand, the extreme of addressing ourselves wholly to the intellect; on the other, the extreme of addressing ourselves wholly to the emotions. Man is both a creature of intellect and feeling, and deeper yet, and underlying both, of a conscience—a deep, all-governing, moral nature. All these sides of his nature are open to us. Many of our hearers have too little intellect to comprehend or feel the force of persuasions or motives addressed to the reason. As well reason with a tomtit or chipmunk.

They will not comprehend your arguments. They will look at you with the dull and stolid look of oxen as your ponderous logic grinds out premise and conclusion. There will not be enough in it for them to excite wonder. To reach them there is no resort but somehow to touch their feelings. If you can move their nerves, you have won them. Unseal the fountains of their tears, and they become your willing captives. You may now, with the skill which, as physicians of souls, you ought to have, develop in them a religious power. There are others who can be reached only through the reason; still others must be captured through the conscience; while not a few must be won, if won at all, through the imagination, or the æsthetic faculty. It is because of this diversity in the hearers that all varieties of power are useful in the pulpit —the weak and the strong, the intellectual and the emotional, the passive and the imaginative. We are sent to save all, and the instrument must be adapted to the specific case. While we may admit the superior quality of one class to another, and the higher tone of instrumentality to be employed, we must not despise the infirm. While the great seine must be used for the great fish, we must not forget that there are minnows for which we must use the dip-net. The dip-net should be a good one. It is possible for the great seine to become a dip-net sometimes. The sum of it all is, that we must learn to employ all possible forces for saving men; all persuasive arts, addressed to the feelings, the fancy, the intellect, the conscience; the ponderous argument, the sublime description, the awakening appeal, the pathetic anecdote, the persuasive entreaty. If by any of these we may win souls for our Lord, it will not be asked whether the instrument was this or that.

"All this does not mean that there is to be no diversity—

that we must all be built on the same model. Diversity is a divine law. Diversity among the people demands diversity in the pulpit. But the diversity in the pulpit includes no triflers, no tricksters, no comedians, no striped jackets and pointed hats. It is a diversity of genius, but not a diversity of aims; a diversity of expression, but not a diversity of consecration; a diversity in which all the varieties, each in its own way, seeks to save souls. We are not to aim to be like others, but rather to be ourselves—emulators, but not imitators. But there are varieties which are always out of place in the pulpit. No one has the right, because such varieties belong to him naturally, to defile the holy place with them. Let him be natural and use his natural gifts in a manner befitting the work in which he is engaged."

A somewhat quaint but an earnest and useful member of our fraternity has well written:—

"Pulpit men, like others, are individualized by the keenest contrasts. No one expects two of us to be alike, any more than he expects two quaggas or two hills to be alike. While we are one, we are, nevertheless, many. We are one as the forest, yet diversified as the trees. We have our own idiocrasy, and law of development, and style of thinking, and tone of voice, and way of saying ideas. Peculiarity is as necessary as identity. Pulpits must differ so long as education, talents, tact, temperament, manhood, and souls differ. Ministers have been divided into schools. While that may be well enough, it seems to puzzle critics to tell to which distinctive school some preachers belong. We must all belong somewhere, although I do not suppose we can have our own choice. Of necessity there must be a great many pulpit types, and many varieties in each type. There are the technical, the philosophical, and the grandiloquous type. There are also the intuitional, the mystical and rhapsodic, the tragic, the eclectic, and other types. These are all more or

less intellectual, spiritual, and useful, but they differ so much that it is impossible for all to come under the same law of work. However, the pulpit is large, so it has a place for all: for the man of curves and tangents, and also for the gentleman of embroidery and fringe; for the ponderous scholar of Hebrew points and Greek particles and jots and tittles, as well as for him of æsthetic tastes and elocutionary grace.

"Nature believes in giants and pigmies, and in all the sizes between. One man is a whole orchestra in himself; another is only a jew's-harp. Please don't blame the harp for not being an organ. It did not make itself. Why should the pulpit not have its share of little men? There are plenty of little men in the pews. There are little men among the lawyers and doctors and mechanics and editors and authors and reviewers; and if heaven is full, there will be some little men there.

"Variety is natural. We must just make the best of it. It was never meant that we should all be alike. God understands what he is about when he enriches every kingdom with diversity. The law of variety is as much his will as any other law. It works every-where. An eagle does not take naturally to walking round a farmer's door-step: a rooster does. A turkey would make a sorry figure in trying to wheel away from the cliffs of the Andes, but a condor feels at home sailing above the dome of Chimborazo and round the volcano of Coquimba."

A paramount requisite is, that the minister preach the word of God and the doctrine of the Book. He only builds on the Book who builds in and with the word of truth. It is the Gospel we are sent to preach, not science; not crude opinions about science; not the little nothings of our fancies; not bright cullings from the fields of literature; not theories and crotchets and quiddities of one kind and another, to excite wonder or admiration; none of these, or other fables of human invention; but the incorruptible word of God: the

doctrines which we find imbedded in and overspreading his revelations, and exhibited in the lives of his saints there recorded. These, and whatever will help to establish, illustrate, and enjoin them, must be the substance of every message. This leaves us the whole field of truth for research and investigation and use, in one form or another. We must bring all our knowledge and all our art to serve the divine word, and make it the hammer to break the heart, or the bread to feed the heart, or the medium of power to sanctify the heart. We must preach the word of God as final, conclusive, absolute authority, from which there is and can be no appeal. We must employ our richest learning and best gifts in the most masterful way possible to find out its meaning; but in most cases that is plain and simple; most of the discussions employed about meanings are in the interest of confusing the reader and misleading him. Taking the simple meaning as it appears to an intelligent reader, as a rule we are to enforce it with all our learning and zeal as the everlasting and authoritative truth of God. Do not think you can improve it. Be not anxious to keep parts of it back lest it will offend. Do not imagine that God has sent you to modify or mitigate it, lest it will hurt. Preach in love and earnestness the truth as he has given it, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth: delve into the rich mine and bring out the precious ingots and nuggets, and give them to the people—the entire wealth. He knows the human heart, and he knows what the truth is for, and what it will do, and you may safely trust him. Be not anxious to apologize for it. It will take care of itself. Only be sure that you get the truth in its meaning and spirit, and lay it on the souls of men to work the work of God. He will take care of it and make it a power unto salvation.

Having said that the function of the Gospel is to build men, in connection with building the divine kingdom, we desire to emphasize the point: the divine kingdom is a kingdom not simply of men, but of *divinely-built* men—men made in the divine image, and therefore made a divine commonwealth. This is no fable, or empty pretense. That the Gospel does build divine men is one of the most patent facts there is. It is a fact not simply known in the consciousness of the believer, but attested to observers. Believers, with various degrees of certitude, know it—they have the witness in themselves; they also make it manifest to others. That there are many in the Churches who are not divinely built—not in the kingdom at all, we are constrained to admit; there are many who are no credit to us as instruments; but, after admitting all this, it remains that there is a true and glorious divine seed in the earth—men and women who know God, and have God in them. The world, despite its carping, knows it well. They are neither few nor scarce in the Churches: men and women who know the secret of a living faith, whose souls are daily nourished from invisible springs, who live lives of purity and self-sacrifice, who are in close and constant sympathy with the Redeemer of the world. Thousands in lowly and unostentatious walks, and obscure and humble homes, carry the King's signet in their hearts. The Gospel *you* preach *does save*. No man can take this boast from us so long as we are able to show our witnesses, not in the word of their testimony merely, but in their witnessing lives, and in their triumphant deaths. Men sometimes point with derision at so-called Christians—the mean and unworthy of our fellowship—and taunt us because they are not better than themselves. They parade a failure which among themselves would be

considered a jest, as in a Christian a damning stain, and so it is. Thus they bear testimony, even in the infirmities which they blazon as our reproach, to the prevailing purity and characteristic integrity and nobility of our divine brotherhood. We would not have it otherwsie. Let it forever be our glory, that no man who bears the Christian name can be guilty of the minor faults even, or live the life which, among unchristian men, would be accounted excusable or even exemplary. We thank the world for recognizing the standard. But when will they turn from their reproaches on account of the confessedly unworthy and exceptional, to take note of those who give constant and sublime proof of motives and principles and supports which are not earthly? When will they ask themselves and wait for the answer: what would these Christians be without the inspiration they get from their religion; and what would they themselves be, and what would the world be, without the influence of the Church which they affect to despise? When will they, in the midst of their hot revilings, stop to consider the debt they owe Christianity for the ægis which it spreads over their homes, their liberties, and their lives?

Let us remember, for our encouragement, that it is not the only work we are doing, when we win converts and see individuals and homes transformed by our Gospel; but, behind that, we propagate influences in the homes and over the lives and practices of those who "wonder and despise and perish;" that saves society from universal ruin; that we build dikes which prevent corruption from inundating the world; that the cry which we raise makes the most daring hesitate, and arrests thousands in their excesses; that thus we help the world, even when we fail to completely Christianize it. Were we not here with divine authority, and were

it not that, somehow, despite their pretenses to the contrary, men do believe this, who, nevertheless, refuse to hear us, they themselves would be carried away by the flood, and all the precious things in the world would perish in the deluge of lust and crime. Let history bear witness, and let the condition of unchristian nations teach us. The very despisers of Christianity, if their mad insanity could prevail to obliterate the Church, would soon, in the overflowing of calamities they could not endure, hasten to repair the awful loss by its restoration. Let the never-to-be forgotten Reign of Terror in France bear witness.

I ought not to pass from this point without further grateful recognition of what has been done in this direction. Man is naturally selfish. It must be no ordinary power which moves a man when he comes to live for others, when he transcends his own family and adopts humanity; when especially he comes to labor and sacrifice willingly and cheerfully for those whom he never saw—of the far-off nations of the world and for generations yet unseen. That is a sublime achievement. Let us appreciate it: that our time is becoming rich with examples of this kind in men who pour out their hundreds and thousands, and not a few their millions, for humanity. A limited number have been taken into the mount—more will follow—a little on, one will become a thousand, and then will grow up *a race* who will adopt *the race*, and the wealth of the world will be laid upon the altar of humanity. And let us not forget, nor permit others to forget, that these fruits are not earth-born. They grow upon a divine root. The Christianity which so many in these days affect to despise, and which, in their mad frenzy, they would relegate to oblivion as a thing of the past, is that which has made the homes and civilization and

institutions which have nourished them. The breast they smite is the breast that bore them—they raven and tear the paps that gave them suck. But their rage will be in vain, and humanity will be spared the horror of their trickery—their names will perish. To contradict their prophecy of evil against God and his Christ, their very malice will build the walls they seek to demolish, and a new-born race will rise to put new crowns on the head of their maligned Lord. What has been will be—their desires will come to naught. They will obstruct, but it will be in vain. Look abroad. Who is the mighty builder to-day? Who is it whose name, all the earth over, is a tower of strength? Who is it the nations are waiting for? Who is it that holds the destiny of the race in his hand? Who is it that shuts and no man can open, and opens and no man can shut? Alexander and Cæsar and Napoleon founded empires by the sword, and they perished. Who is this that builds an empire in the hearts of men, which shall last while the sun and moon endure? Let the ends of the world answer—let every tongue speak. Can any doubt what the answer will be?

When will infidels learn that, however the vicious may praise them, all the good both detest and fear them as contagion and death? In what societies are their names cherished? What mothers teach their children to revere them as guides and benefactors? Who talks of Voltaire, of Robespierre, of Paine? Who, a generation hence, will pronounce the names that have blazoned their infamy before this generation? When humanity counts up its benefactors, and generations follow generations to fill their urns with loving incense, who will bring grateful tears to the graves of those who have spent their lives in defaming Christ? Do they in their madness imagine that even the

leprous gang of their admirers have any faith in them? Do they imagine that when they rob humanity of the safeguards of virtue, and blot out the aspirations of hope, they are to win its gratitude? There is, alas! sorrow and sin enough now—enough, despite all the ameliorating influence of Christian teaching; enough with all the inspirations of Christian hope; enough with a loving God in heaven, and compassionate Redeemer on the throne; enough with all the sympathy which springs from a common hope. What would it be were this monster of unnamable evil—this fell spirit of darkness—this genius of malignity, pollution, and hate—the infidelity of the pest-house of *free thought*, so called, to gain prevalence upon earth? Could men accept it, could it once assume the form of a fixed belief, it would quickly convert earth into hell, and men would long to die to escape the awful horrors of existence. When man despairs he rushes on suicide now, with the bristling fears of eternity to prevent. Take these away, and let the despair of a godless universe and a hopeless eternity seize men, what should hinder them from the friendly service of mutual murder or self-destruction? and, of those that would be willing to live in such a world, what would remain to save them from plunging into a hell of lust and crime more frightful even than a hell of fire?

We must use more care in training our members in the implications of Church membership. There is a great want and a great fault at this point. When a person enters a society of any kind formally, which has duties and obligations, he wants to know precisely what will be expected of him as a member. He ought to be informed carefully beforehand. The Church has adopted a ritual for this purpose, but it is too meager to meet the demand. Common Christian in-

struction from the Catechism and the pulpit supplies in part the need, but imperfectly. There are duties of a common kind, and those which arise out of special relations. A Methodist wants to know what Methodism is—what it is to be a Methodist. He may, on principle of common prudence, find this out for himself; but, in most cases, our people are brought into the Church so carelessly as to gain no distinct idea about any of its peculiarities of doctrine or discipline. It is a reproach to us how litttle real knowledge of Methodism exists among our own people. This is an evil which in this generation ought to be permanently cured. We sometimes wonder at the slight attachment of some of our people to the Church, and the ease with which they drift away from it. The reason, in great part, will be found in the fact that they come into the communion without sufficient knowledge of its character and requirements. Nothing is done to develop the church-idea, or to create church love and loyalty; our very children know as much, and in some instances more, of other Churches than they do of their own, and become ashamed of the Church of their birth through their ignorance of what it is. This is a great and stinging reproach to us, and it is the growth of the last generation. Our fathers did better in this respect than we do. The class-meeting was helpful, as it is not now. We must give attention to this want, or the Church will degenerate into instability and weakness. A Church, like a family, when it loses the family bond, becomes a rope of sand.

An indispensable thing to our success is the revival of thorough and radical religious experience. Much will depend on the pastors at this point. It will be a fatal mistake if we form the habit of inducting members into the Church without a deep sense of the obligation of a religious life, and

a clear and full consciousness of personal salvation. We must keep alive the feeling that membership in the Church means real godliness, holy living, and daily fellowship with God. There is a constant tendency to lapse into worldliness, which can only be prevented by constant pastoral vigilance. "The form without the power" is our first and greatest danger; the next, reached by easy approach, is "the name without the form." The Church must be in the heart and the heart in the Church, or it becomes a mere conventionality.

To promote and keep alive religious feeling we must make much of it. This was a great power with our fathers. It is the inspiration to zeal. A fervent Christian will be a zealous Christian. Keep the holy flame alive. We must not forget that the closet of secret prayer is the fueling station for souls. Here we gather fervor and strength.

We must still be a witnessing Church. This is a great power—a power for self-help and a power by which to convince and win others; but it must be a real witnessing—the irrepressible testimony of our souls, not merely of our lips. We want to testify to the love of God because we have an experience of the love of God. It is important that we maintain the practice as a heart practice. We are witnesses, but we are called to testify that which we know and feel. A perfunctory testimony is both idle and harmful. Let our lips tell what our hearts feel, and nothing else.

May I suggest to my brother pastors what I think will commend itself at once to their good judgment, the wisdom of a course something like this: First, on behalf of the Church in general, the preparation with care of a half-dozen addresses—sermons on Church life—in which to give, (*a*) an account of the Christian Church as such; (*b*) an account of

the origin of our own Church, and what it has come to be; (*c*) an account of our distinctive doctrines; (*d*) an account of our peculiar economy—the reasons for our method of providing pastoral supply, and the advantages of it; (*e*) duty of loyalty to the Church, and matters of this kind. The preparation would lead to profitable study, and it, if done with a true and earnest love to the Church, would produce tone and strength throughout the body, which would appear in the next generation. But if this, for any reason, should be deemed impracticable, then adopt this course, which has recently been adopted by some of our brethren with good effect: Have your probationers meet you once a month during their probation, and after a personal religious examination in the matters of their experience, give them formal instruction on the above points, and on the specific duties of their Church membership. No one can train a young Church member as the pastor can, under whom he enters the Church. That is the moment when to inspire him with ideas of devotion and loyalty. Let us do both, and we will be doing these people the best possible service, the fruits of which will appear in days to come. And may I add, in this connection, let us beware of parading what we may deem the weakness and faults of the Church. This habit is one of great unwisdom, and fraught with exceeding mischief. If our Church has come to set lightly by its institutions, the cause will be found here. There has been too much indulgence of criticism. It does not cure, but aggravates, evils. If a Church's strength and power is a matter which ought to be conserved—and who that wishes well to our common Christianity can doubt it or feel otherwise?—there is nothing so fatal to it as carping; there is nothing so promotive of it as measures of Church training, which keeps the mind in-

formed about what the Church is, and the heart interested in what the Church is doing. Ignorance is weakness, knowledge is strength. The work your Church is doing cannot be known without awakening admiration and honor. Other people wonder at it. The history of it for a hundred years is one of the most marvelous chapters of great achievement. Keep it before our people. It will preserve their ancient spirit. It is the soldier who is informed of the successes of his corps who makes the bravest and most reliable champion in the great crisis. The spirit of victory and of loyalty make an invincible army.

There is nothing in Methodism which needs to be concealed. Every chapter is one to awaken honest pride. Tell it to your children. Keep it alive. Glory in your Methodism. This was the strength of our fathers, when to be a Methodist was to be scorned and persecuted. They gloried in the reproach. Now that the reproach is taken from us, there is danger that we shall become timid. Those who have a weakness for aristocracy make poor Methodists. We are the people's Church. We take stock in humanity. We believe in the poor as well as the rich—the unlearned as well as the learned. We make the poor rich, and lift the unlearned out of their ignorance. We want our doors to be forever open to the people. This must be our glory and rejoicing. Those who are ashamed of the noble work of helping the needy are not the stuff for Methodists. Let us bear our banner aloft, with a glow of honest pride that we are the Church of the people, having room for all; and let us be so proudly loyal, and victoriously progressive and earnest in our great work, that we ourselves and our children shall enjoy it, and the world, and our sister Churches shall continue to say of us, as Chalmers did, "Methodism is Christianity in earnest;" or,

as another has translated it: "Christianity with its sleeves rolled up."

It is important to preserve the closest sympathy between the ministry and the people. This was a characteristic of the early days of Methodism. It would be impossible to calculate the good which passed into the life of the nation from the contact of our early ministers with the home life of the people. This, of course, cannot exist now as it did when our ministers lived among the people on the circuit. Many men that came to eminence in business and the professions received their first impulses and best guidance from the visit of the circuit preacher. As far as possible let the close sympathy which characterized those early days be preserved. The tendency to separation is observable and lamentable. The old spirit of hospitality should be maintained.

Once again, then, let us keep constantly before us the inspiring and ennobling thought that we are called of God to be workers together with him to build the divine kingdom in beauty and strength in all the world. That in order to this, there are mighty foes to be overcome; the combined hosts of error and superstition and sin and spiritual wickedness in high places to be vanquished; and all the nations and kingdoms of the world to be brought to submit to our Emmanuel King. And let us remember that God has called us, the ministers of to day, to this work in the midst of the greatest emergencies that have at any time existed. The great crisis has come—the Armageddon of prophecy—the final great battle of the combined hosts of darkness, of Gog and Magog, against the truth, and against the Prince of the armies of heaven. We are in the thick and rush of the fight, and the standards are mighty. Many hearts are sinking, and many knees growing weak. The fortunes of the

day to many seem indecisive. The enemies are neither few nor contemptible; they are sending up shouts of defiance and triumph from many parts of the field; they are bent on victory. The whole world is standing in almost breathless suspense over the great struggle; the peoples of all lands are watching and waiting; the telegraph blazes with intelligence, and the press is burdened with news of the situation; princes and kings are plotting and counter plotting; universities and senates are among the combatants; heaven waits the issue. The future depends on the mighty catastrophe. Men of God! to you is given the key of the tremendous crisis. Be true to your King; "put on the whole armor of God." "Quit you like men." Make your studies and closets burn and blaze. Stand on the watch-towers of Zion. "Cry aloud and spare not." As God is God, he will lead you to victory. A little on the battle will clear away, and the ensign of the Prince will peacefully wave over a conquered and redeemed world; and the inhabitants of the mount Zion which shall then fill the whole earth, shall cry out and shout for the King that is in the midst thereof. Let the old men bring their wisdom and experience, and the young men their fresh learning and manly strength, and vie with each other in earnestness and devotion; let all creeds and sects emulate each other, and the pulpit and the pew conspire together; let charity move hand in hand with zeal, and the hand of labor keep pace with the heart of prayer; let culture bring its eloquence and crudeness its homely sincerity; let all come "to the help of the Lord against the mighty," and the night of the world's sorrow and ignorance and sin will soon merge, and melt into the dawn of millennial brightness and peace! Ultimately truth must win—"the eternal years of God are hers." The one thing wanted is, that we be

manly men; that we be worthy of our vocation; that we be thoroughly harnessed for our great work; that we stand in the van of the age; that we keep the confidence of the wise and virtuous in our sincerity and ability, and show ourselves competent to lead our generation. Failing in these things, we neither deserve nor can win success. The Master calls, Onward! onward! the perishing world cries out in all its waste and desolate places, Onward! onward! the voice comes from the four quarters of the globe, and the mountains echo it to the seas, Onward! onward! The heavens are watching and the earth is waiting. Dare we, so surrounded, so encompassed, with such motives to heroism, with such issues to strive for, with such guarantees of success—dare we be less than sublime? If none of these considerations move us, let us, for shame' sake, take off our clerical robes, and go among the swine-herds to which we belong. Let us no longer dishonor God and insult men by braying our weakness and folly within the sacred precincts of the altars of God and the Christian pulpit! Either let us be men, or strip off the priestly vestment! rise to the sublimity of the holy calling, or make way for others who shall be worthy of our sublime vocation!

Thoughts for the Pew.

Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul. Again, When a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness, and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumbling-block before him, he shall die: because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless, if thou warn the righteous man, that the righteous sin not, and he doth not sin, he shall surely live, because he is warned; also thou hast delivered thy soul.—EZEK. iii. 17–21.

Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.—ACTS vi, 2–4.

THOUGHTS FOR THE PEW.

BRETHREN of the Lay Electoral Conference, I have been desired by your brethren of the ministerial conference to speak some words of greeting and welcome for them. It gives me great pleasure to comply with their request, as well on my own behalf as theirs. I am certain you will not be displeased if my address should pass beyond words of mere greeting and welcome to some practical counsels and advices touching matters of common interest to yourselves and your ministerial brethren; rather, you expect and desire it. Many of you were present to hear my address to the ministers with respect to their peculiar work, and you were pleased to give signs of approval. You will not be displeased, I am sure, if I use the same liberty with you with respect to your duty. As my office relates me to you in much the same way that it relates me to them, it would be an injustice to you if I should be less faithful—I dare not. In any compact involving important reciprocal duties and responsibilities, it is very necessary that neither party should be permitted to forget or become negligent, lest the yoke of the compact become grievous, and lest the ends aimed at fail.

When, a few years ago, a time so recent that it is yet fresh in your memories, you were raised to the position of co-legislators of the Church, many questioned the wisdom of the measure, and not a few entertained grave fears, and even prophesied evil results. Peculiar contingencies served, in a very brief period, to demonstrate that it was both wise and timely. No one now either doubts its wisdom or fears its influence.

Up to that time the power had all vested in the hands of the ministers. True, they had been careful to guard the rights of the laity by provisions of organic law which could not be altered without their consent; true, the power was carefully exercised; but the surrender of power is not always easy or graceful, and when wrenched by violence imperils the stability of institutions. In this case the change was wrought without disturbing agitation, or even solicitation, and was as creditable to the parties surrendering as it was grateful to the party accepting it. We all rejoice over it as an accomplished fact. Not a little advantage of the change is, that it brings us into harmony with the spirit of the age, and silences the reproaches of our enemies and the questionings of our friends: but a much more important advantage is, that it brings us into closer and more intimate relations among ourselves; and a still greater advantage is, that it clothes you with rights and responsibilities which it is wholesome for you to exercise, and which it is good for the body to be exercised by you. So, on behalf of your brethren, I extend hearty greetings to you to-day. We are glad to see you here, and will be glad to see your delegates elect in the great Church council in May next. We rejoice to hear of the harmony which pervaded your deliberations, and to note the evidences of your continued deep interest in and loyalty to our common Church, the echoes of which reached us even before you came in person to report them.

And now, dear brethren, will you permit me to turn from these pleasing topics to some of a more practical, but, I trust, not less pleasing, kind. In Christ Jesus we are one—members of one body, of which he is the head—but we are called to different functions in the body. It is of this I wish more particularly to speak, that I may especially direct your atten-

tion to matters of interest to you, and through you to the laity throughout the Church.

In the order of the Church, and, as we all believe, in the order of God, we, your ministers, are called to be ministers—to the duties of instruction and administration in the house of God. The covenants we enter into in accepting this holy trust are such as to separate us from all secularities. We are set apart exclusively to this one work, and are required to give to it our exclusive time and undivided powers. We may not turn aside, without treason to our vows, to attend to any other pursuit. What our vows require you also demand. The nature of our work and the covenants we have made forbid that we give thought or effort to provide for our temporal wants even, or those of our families. This withdrawment from secularities and sacrifice of remunerative pursuits is, that we may be your servants—that we may, by diligent study and prayerfulness, minister to you in spiritual things. We freely relinquish the pursuits in which men generally and naturally delight, and renounce the hopes of fortune for ourselves and our children, and accept the life of homeless itinerants, going where we may be sent, surrendering the social and friendly ties which are prized by others, calling no place our home, and giving ourselves to anxious cares and many self-denials, that we may build your homes in beauty and add comfort and dignity to you. We consent to poverty without complaining, and renounce all idea of making any provision for a rainy day, or for sickness, or for old age, and all idea of helping our children to start the world in competence, and every thing else looking to the accumulation of property or gain, that we may serve you. We do not even now speak of these things as a hardship, but simply call you to the recognition of the fact. Nor are we unmindful

of the compensations. It is not a joyless task. The Master, who has called us to the work, has not had the cruelty to impose on us unrequited burdens. It is a sweet and blessed service. While we give ourselves to you, out of secret garners in many ways he abundantly enriches us. He makes your fatness to be ours.

But while he has called us away from secularities, he has called you to them, that we, in our non-secular life, and you, in your secular life, may equally serve him; for we are all servants under one Master. The vocations are different, but they are for the same end. Neither can do without the other. In different ways we work to the same result. You are not called to teach, but we cannot teach without you. The two are one agent, each supplying a necessary factor, and so each alike sharing in the great common honor of being workers together with God. Your secularity and our non-secularity are thus alike sacred, if we will have it so. I desire to point out how this is.

By not placing you in the sanctuary God has not released you from service. On the contrary, he has, in that, appointed you to a special service, to be reached in some one of many ways which he opens to you, leaving the responsibility of selection with you. The special call is, that you should engage in some branch of useful industry, by which, to help the general welfare, procure things necessary and convenient to your own development and the proper care of your families. No truth is plainer in his word than this. It is a greatly neglected and a greatly misunderstood truth, and I want, if possible, to lift it into clearness and enforce the true grounds of it. It is no more optional with you whether you will be secular or not, than it is with us whether we will be sacred or not. Uncalled to the latter, you are called to

the former. The particular kind of secularity only is left optional.

God has no sinecures, no idlers, no spongers. He imposes labor as a duty on all men, not for labor's sake, but for the results of labor. It was the law of paradise, and has never been repealed. Jesus teaches it in the parable of the talents, and it is re-enforced in the epistles. There is a reason for this: labor is a talent—that is, it is a power for good. The law demands the use of the power for the sake of what it can do for human welfare. All laws are for welfare, and whatever will produce it is enjoined in all worlds and to all eternity.

Under this law we exist. When the young man arrives at a responsible age it requires him to select what secularity he will pursue. Since he must work, it is his duty to consider to what end he should work, and what kind of work he should do. As a rational and accountable being he must give heed to these questions. That God wants him to make the best use of his powers—that is, that use of them that will secure the largest contribution to welfare — his own and others that may be influenced by him—there can be no doubt.

It is his duty, therefore, to look around him and determine, to the best of his ability, what particular calling he will select —whether he will be a farmer, or mechanic, or merchant, or student, or professional man in some one of the learned vocations, or only a day-laborer. Of course circumstances will do much to determine his choice; but this does not free him from the duty of carefully considering the question in the light of circumstances. Both on moral and rational grounds he should choose that which promises to make his life most useful and happy. The interests to be affected are his own

and others—if he shall determine on marriage, his own and those of his family, and those of the other portion of mankind. He cannot innocently be oblivious to the question of remunerativeness. It is his moral duty, as well as an obligation of reason, that he should consider this. He may set one remunerativeness over against another; may weigh social or political influence against money compensations, or literary or professional usefulness against either of these; but he must choose that which, on rational and moral grounds, seems to promise the best returns of helpfulness to welfare, that which will put the largest value in his life. This, under an ideal economy such as the divine economy is, must be the determinative factor in the law of duty. God requires nothing of any of his creatures that is not for their greatest good.

Having selected his calling—or if, as in most cases, he has drifted into it—it becomes his duty to prosecute it faithfully; he is bound to make the most of it. Is it a money pursuit? he should make the most money possible according to right principles; for the gain is the power which comes to him, and becomes his means and measure of usefulness. Is he a farmer? he should aim to be the best farmer possible. Is he a mechanic, a merchant, a banker? whatever he is, he is bound to pursue his business in the most skillful manner with reference to recompense, if so be he observe the laws of righteousness and mercy. If his choice be a profession, he should make the best success possible in his profession—the best lawyer, the best doctor, the best legislator—always limiting all that he does by the obligations of morality. It is all expressed in a sentence: he must make the most productive value of himself and his opportunities. This is the divine law of duty. It requires that he should be on the

alert; that he should make use of brain and hand; that he should do his utmost to convert every thing within his reach to a power which he can use. He must let nothing divert him or escape him which can be utilized, keeping strictly within the requirements of justice and mercy. If he can, he must be the best man there is in his line.

Demands of ideal law never conflict. Temporal duties—or duties pertaining to this life—can never interfere with spiritual duties—or duties pertaining to the life to come—but are always subservient to them. When a man properly attends to his temporal duties he is so far in the line of his spiritual duties; and he cannot attend to his spiritual duties and omit or neglect these. Following the obligation to the wise selection of our business and its diligent and industrious prosecution, comes the duty of taking care of its results. We are held under the strictest obligation to the law of thrift. It is not left optional with us whether we will or not husband the fruits of our toil; we must do it. They are a sacred trust for the care and use of which we are as much responsible as we are for the right use of our faculties or powers in acquiring them. What of power we acquire is no more our own, to be disposed of *ad libitum*, than we are our own. We have no more right to misuse it than we have to omit to produce it. We may not burn it up or squander it. Whether it be property power, or power of personal or professional influence, or any other power thrust upon us or acquired, we are held responsible not to waste it or abuse it. It is a lent talent, and the Lender will require an account. I am addressing myself to Christians who recognize the obligation of this law. I am anxious that you should take the full measure of it into your minds. Have I correctly represented it? Is it true that God permits no

idler? that he forbids the retirement, or non-use or misuse, of a talent—the putting it in a napkin and burying it? that he demands use and increase? that he has incorporated this law in the on-going of things? that he has proclaimed it in his revealed law? Recognizing it, can you be indifferent to it? No, brethren, it is not optional whether you obey these divine laws or not. They are eternal statutes. They are binding. We can disobey them, but in doing so we must incur guilt, and guilt is no trifle. Let us put from us the thought or practice of supposing that what we have is our own, and that because we can use it as we please, therefore, we have the *right* to use it as we please. He that sent us into the world, and gave us the world, and made its possible good to ourselves and others conditional on our right use of our powers and the right use of its productions, has shown us plainly before our eyes in experience and observation, and in his moral law, that he will not be indifferent to omission or transgression, however we may be.

The duty of labor is not because of any good in labor itself, as such, nor is it simply an arbitrary arrangement imposed by a superior on an inferior; it is a provision to meet a want, and that is the ground of the law and obligation. Every duty is in the interest of welfare, and is hence a duty. The good and necessities of human life require labor, the merest existence or continuance demands it, much more all the high and properly human necessities. The earth and heaven are stored with riches, but they must be sought diligently by both brain and hand. Possibly it might have been otherwise, but it is not. The law of labor is organic—grounded in the very structure of the universe. Non-labor and especially non-intelligent labor are the death of the system. The absolute necessity of it, to realize the purpose of

the system, is the ground of the moral law over free and intelligent beings; so that duty rises not simply as a necessity out of natural wants, but as an obligation on ethical grounds. The neglect is not simply death, but it is sin, which is manifold worse than death. It is a necessity which underlies all human growth and development, and therefore is an organic law. To neglect it, is necessarily to lapse into or never to rise above barbarism. The obligation is universal on ethical grounds. Circumstances may raise some individuals above the natural need. Inherited fortune or sudden accumulation may put one in possession of means to obtain many of the goods for which industry is usually a need, and might seem, therefore, to dispense with the duty; on the contrary, it can only change the direction and complexion of it. As there are varieties of industries, all of which are useful, and as the individual has a right to select that which commends itself to his moral sense and rational intelligence, so circumstances modify the quality and mode of his work, but the law does not, therefore, let go its hold. "He is still bound, as a steward, to use his entire power according to the will of the great Master, who must forever be supreme."

We turn now to consider the uses that are to be served by work. There are two conceivable reasons for incorporating the act and the need of labor in the natural and moral systems. One is, that the act of labor should itself be useful; the other is, that the products should be useful. There are also two conceivable degrees in which labor should be useful: one, which would limit its possible usefulness to the laborer himself, which might be modified by serving simply as to his animal wants, or by serving him in his higher human wants; the other, that which would extend its possible usefulness to others; and this, again, might be limited or modi-

fied, by its serving to the animal wants of others, or made to meet their higher human wants; and the natural and moral law which imposes it might conceivably be controlled by the first, or might be as broad as the second. What do we find to be the fact?

If the first law obtained—limiting the end of labor to the welfare of the worker himself—it would enshrine selfishness and make it the determinative factor of duty. The divine idea is the very reverse of that. It is, "No man liveth unto himself." The interests of the whole are indissolubly bound up with the interests of the individual.

But the law undoubtedly respects the individual good; that is, it is appointed for his good; and for his good in two respects. First, the need to work is itself beneficial. It develops faculty; it makes fiber. Driven by it, the man becomes a man. It especially brings forth the distinctly manly qualities. It quickens the mind, and promotes the moral and humane sympathies. It is a beneficent arrangement. It creates happiness. Employment is sanitary to mind and body. He who thinks that idleness or ease is bliss, knows nothing of the philosophy of perfect human enjoyment. Action, action, intense earnest action, is the elixir of life—is the joy of heaven. Holy endeavor is bliss.

But that which gives dignity to work, and raises it into the category of noblest duties, is the good which its products enables us to do, and which the moral law of labor requires us to do.

What, then, is the right use of the property of any kind we create by labor? There is scarcely a more important question than this. The common and thoughtless answer is: To use it for our personal gratification; to buy what we choose with it, or hoard it up, or give it away as we like; it

is ours, we made it honestly, no one else has any right to it; we can employ it to make more, or we can use it for self-indulgence, or we can take care of it for our children; we can use it to procure for ourselves costly splendor or we can waste it in meaningless pleasures; and, so long as we do not employ it for the oppression of the poor, or as a means of evil, neither God nor man has a right to complain. This is the practical answer in most cases, and even by many, if not most, Christian people.

Suppose we should raise the question, "What is the divine idea in the case?" what do you suppose would be the answer? Is there one of you who imagines it would be any thing resembling that we have described? Suppose we could get away from our little selves and petty surroundings, and gain a grand view of human life and its possibilities, could we ourselves take such a view?

Perhaps the divine answer would be something like this: These things which you have produced are valuable. I have intrusted you with them as my steward; employ them as a means of good to yourselves and others.

First of all, provide for your own needs out of them. I say first of all, because it is a divine law that a man shall first care for himself. No claims can ever take precedence of the real claims of self. A man's first duty is to himself, and no other duty can ever require the real interests of self to be sacrificed—they must forever be first. But what are these interests of self that must take precedence? Personal interests are of two kinds. They are both real and absolute, and cannot be postponed without violation of the most sacred law; and no other duty can separate them or set them aside. They are provisions for the wants of the body, and provisions for personal wants: for the first, necessary food and raiment,

a shelter, and home; for the second, culture and training. How much he may expend on these must depend on circumstances, on other demands, and on his ability. Until they are fairly provided for, other claims must stand in abeyance; but, any thing beyond these necessities must wait on other claims. To the utmost need and possibility of self-care and development we may enjoy and employ the fruits of our toil, but nothing for mere gratification or waste.*

Next to provision for our own wants is provision for those who are dependent on us—our families. In a certain sense this is but an extension of the claims of self. No other claim can come in which would substantially affect or impair this, until it is fully met. We are bound to take full and adequate care of our homes. Now, what are these legitimate wants? It is doubtful if there is any practical question of so much importance so imperfectly understood. Our families, like ourselves, have two classes of urgent wants, for which they are dependent on us, and it is not optional whether we will attend to them or not. The highest law requires them of us. We must provide for their temporal wants food, clothing, and shelter. What kind of food, what kind of clothing, what kind of shelter, will depend on circumstances and our ability. To meet this demand we are under the necessity to call in the help of others. We must supplement our producing power by that of the farmer, the weaver, the merchant, the grocer, the mechanic, the manufacturer, the public carrier. No one of us could possibly ourselves provide what may be considered the merest necessities of life. In some way we must contrive to build all the industries into our individual homes—all skills, all arts, all products, from all quarters of the globe. Left alone, we could scarcely rise

* Note D.

above barbarism, indeed we could not. So we must take the product of our own genius or labor, and convert it by some medium of exchange into the products of all other workers. Thus, by exchange of labor, or by purchase out of the pay for our labor, we can build our homes in comfort, and what we can do becomes not merely an option with us, but a duty. These things that pertain to bodily welfare are important. The merest physical condition of a human home demands much care and forethought. For the want of it many a life is worn out in absolute discomfort, amounting sometimes to martyrdom; many a wife and mother is tortured through the years with a living agony, to which death would be preferable; and children are reared in conditions to brutalize them; and this not for the want of means to make it otherwise, but from indifference, or want of thought and proper feeling. Years drag on without comforts or conveniences, and the home becomes cheerless and loveless as a tomb. *

But this is but one side of the wants to be provided for, and by far the inferior side; though I think in a majority of cases it is safe to say that it is about all that is thought of—the toiler proposes nothing more. Food, raiment, a home, are the things about which he thinks, the things he works for; but which, after all, often, for the simple want of proper thought and feeling, he poorly provides. That there are other and deeper wants which must, by a much higher imperative, be provided for, he forgets entirely, or for the want of reflection hardly knows of — soul wants — wants of the immortal. It is one of the saddest facts I know, that even in many Christian homes the children are regarded as if they were but animals, if we may judge by the manner in which they are treated. I do not mean that they are abused or

* Note D.

maltreated; but that their greatest wants are simply misunderstood, and adequate care not bestowed on them because of the misconception. It is assumed that if proper food is supplied, and proper raiment provided, and a comfortable home secured, that nothing more is necessary, or at most, that a small amount of education will supply whatever more is needed or desirable. They will grow up to manhood and womanhood in course of time, and the years will bring the knowledge and accomplishments proper to maturity. Thus Christian families are growing up all over the land, and there is not even a sense of the sad mistake; and the parents comfort themselves that their children are not being spoiled by education; when in fact, as to their true life, they are being starved by slow process, and sent into the world the merest excuses for men and women, with no suitable preparation for such lives as are possible to them, and such lives as they ought to live. The school and the church are looked upon as luxuries, or, worse still, as surplusage. They are, in fact, as much an essential part of the apparatus of human life as are the farm and the workshop. They can be dispensed with, and the family survive, but not with completeness; the animal only will live, the proper human element will perish. There are multitudes of families all about us in which the humanity is at zero. The produce of our labor is not simply for the kitchen or wardrobe; it must be built into the souls of our children. It is a vast, as well as most glorious, work to build a noble man or a worthy woman. To simply breed them and grow them, requires the same kind of care that it does to raise fine cattle; many a child receives less attention even than that: but to train and develop them into human beauty and worthiness is quite another thing, and puts into requisition another class of agencies. We must call

in other helps than the farmer and merchant and house-builder and clothes-makers. We must employ the best agencies to teach and train; we must have as an annex to every home, the school and the church. The professors of many learnings, and the priest of one faith but many-sided power to teach and persuade and admonish and guide, must come to the help of a father's anxiety and a mother's love. Again, we say this is not optional. It stands among the prime duties we owe to our children, which is obscure only to the ignorant and uninstructed; and that often by the guilty neglect of the ministers of God, who are called to instruct the people in the matters of duty.

But, not to dwell in further detail, I want to leave with you the thought of your great responsibility in this matter. You are fathers, and represent the fathers of the Church; as such I speak to you, and through you to all Christian fathers. God devolves upon you the duty of looking after your homes. Your brain and muscle are for this, as one of the very chief of your sacred duties. No man can be a worthy Christian who neglects at this point, any more than he can if he neglect prayer or the holy sacraments. You are appointed to bring up a holy generation. You must give thought to it as well as prayer; and must build the products of your industry and thrift into it, as well as your prayers and thought. Your money must be spent for it, with prudence and wisdom, even as your prayers are offered for it. This is what all that we earn is for. It is its supremest use. You have nothing on hand, and never can have any thing on hand, of any comparable importance to the proper training and development of your children. God not only demands it, but he needs it. He wants your sons and daughters to be polished after the similitude of a palace, for their

sakes, and for his sake, and for your sake; but not for that alone; he wants it for the sake of the world, and for the sake of all the ages of men and women. He wants them to be trained that they may train others; wants them to be lights and powers. In your homes may be spirits who, under proper training, would move this whole world upward. He demands that you create, as far as you can, the favorable conditions. He demands that your homes shall be ideal homes —as nearly perfect as you, with all possible helps at your command, can make them: homes well appointed, well supplied; homes enriched with books, and the culture and the amenities which come from education and mental and spiritual training; homes of delicate refinement, and with robust common sense and high moral principles; homes where love sits enthroned like a queen; homes where the parents work to the one supreme end of sending forth a royal generation of sons and daughters equipped with knowledge, and inspired with high and honorable aims; homes that shine with the divine light of intelligence and virtue. This is what God wants and what he demands; and it is your duty to create such homes. Have I exaggerated or in any way misstated the truth? If not, then your duty is plain. What a magnificent work it is! God has given you being. He has enriched you with power. He has laid the world at your feet. He has said, Go and possess it. Use brain and hand to subjugate it. Do not abuse it; do not waste it. Build yourselves by it into noble men. Build beautiful homes. Raise up royal children. Make heaven and eternity rich. This is your work.

Yet once more, before leaving this branch of thought with respect to your duty, I desire to bring your minds again face to face with the relations of the Church to your life, and

your relations to the Church in the matter of your labor. This, in fact, is the special subject I had in my mind when I commenced speaking.

If I am right in the theory I have set forth as to your duty, both to yourselves and to your families, and if I am right in the assumption that the Church is an indispensable help to the adequate discharge of your duty, as much so as the farm, the home, the manufactory; that in fact the one can no more be dispensed with than the other, then what follows?

Then this follows: you *must* have the Church. Then this follows: you must, out of your means, provide the Church. Then this follows: you ought to make it as much a part of your calculation in the matter of necessary expenses as the items of bread and clothing. Then this follows: you ought to arrange to meet the expense with the same liberality and cheerfulness with which you meet all other items of necessary expense: am I not justified in saying, with more cheerfulness and gladness, and more abundant liberality?

I speak to you now as representative men, and through you to the Church, and ask, Do we so treat the subject? Do we put the Church in among our necessary expenses, as we do other things? Do we make our portion of its proper expense a matter of calculation and thought, as we do our family expenses? Do we insist on paying our debt in this case as we do when we buy a piece of land, or some article of provision or clothing for ourselves or our children? Do we do it? If not, why not? In the light of facts, is it not lamentably apparent that we are peculiarly slow and reluctant in this matter? Is it right, is it worthy of us, that this is so? Must the Church forever be a pensioner on our bounty instead of a claimant on our honor and justice? Can we do without it? Do we, as Christians or men, even, entertain the

thought? If not, shall we forever treat it as if it were a mendicant begging for the crumbs from our table, whom we may dismiss if we choose, or may screw down to the least possible contribution as an object of charity? Is it not time that we correct both our feelings and practice on this subject?

The next matter in this connection I want to call your attention to is this: If the Church is an important integer in our life, is it not also important that it be as perfect in all of its appointments as possible, so as to bring the full force of all possible value to us? And what is your relation as laymen to its efficiency in respect of these?

Of course the Church, like every thing effected and affected by human agency and infirmity, may be more or less slovenly. If slovenly in its pulpit, and slovenly in its discipline, and slovenly in its appointments, and slovenly in the character of its members, it will be a poor thing, and have in it but little worth saving. But whose fault will it be? It can be a power for good; if it is not, who is to blame? The minister, if the fault be with him, certainly will not escape. If he betray his trust, if he prove to be unworthy in example, if he fail to qualify himself for his work, if he neglect his duties as teacher and pastor, if he lack in earnestness and devotion, if he be not a man of God, "thoroughly furnished to every good word and work," "instant in season and out of season," if he lack in fidelity, and zeal, and love of souls, if his services are tame and spiritless, then fearful will be his responsibility. But even if all this be so, you will still be without excuse if any part of the sad condition be attributable to you; much more, if he be a faithful minister, and the Church then go halting, you need to be concerned about your responsibility. There is a wide and damaging tendency to throw all the responsibility of failure or success upon the

pulpit. The pulpit has, indeed, a great and solemn responsibility; nor would I in the least abate the sense of it. God will hold the watchmen to strict account. But I wish to lay upon your minds your relations to the question of the Church's efficiency. All through this land there are half-dead Churches, and the cry of lamentation comes up for the want of efficiency in the ministry; and we do not deny that there is reason; but what we want you to consider is, whether this is the sole or even chief cause.

Consider, are not you the Church? Is it not, after all, largely what you make it? How, then, can you help cure the evil? What are your duties as laymen in the premises? Of course it would be the merest platitude to say that you need yourselves to be thorough Christians; yet I must perpetrate that platitude, and linger over it for a few moments. The Church is what its members are. If they are not thorough Christians, how can the Church be any thing but dead? You are the Church, and you are dead. What can any preacher do with a dead Church on his hands? Are you not as much responsible for your deadness as any other person can be? Can you justly lay it to the account of the minister that you are dead? Has he not enough to bear without your loading him with your sin and the consequences of your neglect? Is it right for you to expect the minister to carry you—to do your work as well as his own? Are you babes and children, that you should still be carried or nursed at the breast? You need to have the Church a power. Make it a power. But you say, "If only the preacher were alive—if he would rouse me up." Suppose you take another view. You have been looking to the preacher and complaining of him; may it not be that you are the cause of all the trouble yourself; may it not be that

it is your indifference, your deadness, that kills him, or neutralizes his words? Are there no duties that you are neglecting? No coldness and apathy that make you a hinderance? These are questions which every layman needs to answer. If the preacher is a factor, so are you. The fault may be his, or it may be yours, or it may be common to both.

What, then, is your duty with regard to the Church? I return to the answer already made, which we agreed was a merest platitude: it is your first duty to be thoroughly, profoundly, through and through, a Christian—a Christian continually—a man of God at home, every day, in the town, in business, so that men will know you as such, not by your Sunday clothes and meeting-day face and professions, but by your spirit and life. That is your privilege, that is your duty. The Church will not be a dead Church when you are alive. That is what God wants of you. Will you dare to be that? Never mind telling about it or complaining about others—be it; the world will find it out and feel its power.

But you have churchly duties, as well as the personal duty of being thoroughly a Christian, and you cannot maintain the character of the latter without discharging the former. Let me specialize several things with respect to these churchly duties:

You want to keep your spirit sweet toward the Church. It is easy to get out of joint; then every thing goes wrong. Nothing can be done right when the soul is soured. Sour godliness is an uncomfortable thing. The spirit of censoriousness and fault-finding, especially when it is the most prominent element in one's religion—which is sure to see wrong in every body but itself—is a cuckoo's egg in the dove's nest, which ultimately feeds upon the nest itself. Keep sweet toward the Church. Cultivate a gentle and loving spirit.

Especially keep in loving relations with your pastor. You will get little good out of him if you permit estrangement to come into your heart or home toward him. Some good people seem to think that a habit of censoriousness toward others proves that they are immaculate, and takes all the blame of whatever evils there is away from them, and posits them at somebody else's door. Keep sweet yourself, and strive to keep the body sweet. A fomenter of evil is like a pestilence. Watch the door of your lips, and utter no words of resentment or censoriousness that will propagate coldness and alienation among friends. Let the blessing of the peace-maker be yours. Be interested in the Church. Carry it about with you in your heart as you do your home. Remember it is *your* Church, and its welfare is *your* welfare. If it suffers you suffer. Whatever militates against it militates against you. If you, by neglect or willfulness, or by word or act, hurt it, it is your own soul that will receive the wound. The blow you give it will rebound on your own head, and your wife and your children will receive the stab. Cherish the Church, and it will cherish you; starve it, and it will bring famine and leanness into your own soul, and into your own home. Pray for your Church daily in all your praying. Let your language, the language of your deepest and sincerest soul, be, "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. . . . Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy." Love the gates and the ways of Zion, and teach it to your children. Love to dwell in the house of God, to be present at all its solemn feasts. Be not simply a spectator in the assemblies, interested in what others do and say, but let your soul and your voice be in the worship. Be not critical or severe, but simple, earnest, and loving toward all. Ob-

serve these things and do them, and your soul will feast on the marrow and fatness of the house of God.

Care begets love, and love begets happiness. Take care of the sanctuary. Do not let it fall into decay or neglect. It is your soul's sabbath home—your children's home. At its altar-rail you receive the holy sacraments. From its portals you will be carried to your last resting-place. Keep it clean and in order, and have this on your heart. Do not wait for others, or account it less your business than that of your ministers. Your God's house should be the sweetest and most carefully kept part of your own house. Do not think it a burden or a tax to train vines and lay paint on the place where you are to spend your best and happiest hours. Let it be a picture of beauty, and let your pew be kept full and warm with the cheerful presence of your household at all the gatherings and holy feasts of the sanctuary. These may seem like little things, but they will make the house of God dear to you, and it will spring among you fountains of sweet waters and fertilizing streams in the desert of life. Make the house of the Lord a joy to you, and it will make you a joy; build it strong, and it will build you strong; lay its stones in beauty, and it will garnish and beautify your souls, and the souls of your seed after you. Make the habit of remembering that most of all that you carry with you over the river will be what has gone into your life from the sanctuary. The rest you will leave behind with the cerements of the grave.

Cherish loving relations with your pastor. You are to take the bread of life from his lips. Pray much for him, that he may be able to instruct you, and feed your soul and the souls of your family. This will prepare you to get good from him. He may not be your choice; he does not exactly

suit your taste; his voice and manner are not agreeable; he has little ways that are unpleasant to you; nevertheless, he is your pastor. The habit of real praying for him will cure all these petty annoyances. Especially when you come to hear the word of God from his mouth, pray for him, that he may have good success in preaching. The crumbs will turn to loaves, and the wee drops into rivers, while you open your heart in prayer for him. As far as possible let him feel that you have him in loving thought, and he will repay it all in richness to you.

Look after the minister's wants. Provide generously for him. Don't let him feel too much the pinch of poverty. Remember that, as a rule, all that he will have will be what you provide for him. He does not ask you that you make him rich; but do you see to it that he is not made to feel mean and uncomfortable. Remember his home. Let the sacrificing pastor's wife feel that she shares your loving care. See that the parsonage is kept in good condition, and the furniture in good repair. It will pay to be generous to the mill that grinds the flour, and the flail that threshes out the grain.

In our peculiar economy, which, despite all its drawbacks, is perhaps, all in all, the best adapted for usefulness, and, possibly, in the lapse of years for comfort also, there is special need that you heed these suggestions. The preacher often comes to you a stranger. There is no special comfort in moving. He comes weary with packing and unpacking. He comes from warm hearts, and fresh and tender expressions of interest. The mother is weary and sad at the separation. The children are noisy with the novelty and restless with curiosity. May be some little graves have been left. If ever there be a time when this family need thoughtful

love it is now. Meet them at the threshold of their new home with cordial welcome. Have a fire in the kitchen stove, and a refreshing meal awaiting them. Let the rooms be swept and garnished for their incoming. It will give sauce to all the years, and they will speak of your kindness in aftertimes, when age and sorrow have frosted their heads and yours. Treasure these things in your memories, and they will do you good.

One thing more: I have spoken of your duty to yourselves and your families. It would be an inexcusable fault if I should leave the impression on your minds that these duties, which I have admitted to be first and chiefest, are the only ones; that having provided amply for these, not simply for the bodies, but for the souls also, there is now nothing more for you to do but to enjoy life; that having accumulated enough and to spare you may tear down your houses and build greater, wherein to store your accumulation, and say to your souls, "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; . . . eat, drink, and be merry." So thought the ancient fool, and so reason many fools in our time. Whose, then, are these surplus goods, and whose this remaining strength? I dare not say, that when a man has accumulated great possessions there should be no relaxation of toil, or that he should not use a portion of his gains for costly pleasure for himself and family which he could not once enjoy. One of the benefits, yea, one of the *divine* rewards, of diligence in business, and wise plans of trade and investment, is the enjoyment of special comforts and delights: delights of travel; delights of works of art, of books, of refining relaxations and associations. It is not a sin to enjoy the results of our labor—it is a Christian duty. It is not a duty to continue enslaving toil when we, by honest gain, are able to rise out of it. It would be

neither wise nor comely. Better employ those who need such work, to whom it will be the best and most profitable use of time and energy. Nor is it a duty to live like a pauper when one has the wealth of a prince. To do so would be both a sin and a reproach. There is nothing more despicable than a rich boor, except a rich miser.

What, then, shall be done with this surplus energy, and with this surplus wealth? In general, keep the mind healthfully employed, in using it to make more, and in wisely disposing of it. Neither this surplus energy nor surplus wealth is yours. There is, in fact, no surplus. It is all, to the last atom, needed. What is wanted is, that it be given the right direction. He to whom it belongs has lodged it with you, and, before long, he will make inquisition for it; and what he will demand will be to know what you have done with his goods.

Having provided for your own, a needy world stands at your door, and two imperatives confront, *waste nothing—distribute wisely.* These will exercise all the grace and wisdom you possess. *Waste nothing* does not mean enjoy nothing beyond the merest necessities of life; that were to reduce you to a miser, and would take much of the best value out of your possessions, and is the dictate of narrowness and ignorance, not of enlightened piety. It means, spend nothing for mere show; use nothing for mere lust; destroy nothing from mere wasteful extravagance and vanity. Make every dollar spent represent some sensible and valuable object; something that will be of real use to yourself, or home, or some other worthy object; but count the dollars well spent that aid to build up a noble home and a worthy family.

Distribute wisely: That means, first, do not retire it from usefulness, simply because you have no unsupplied wants;

do not hoard it. That will be to rob God of its benefit for the ends for which he intrusts you with it. He wants it, but this does not mean that he does not want you to have it because you have no personal need for it. He wants you to use it and direct it as stewards. This does not mean that you are to put it off your hands rashly, or scatter it indiscriminately. It does not mean that it is *wrong* for *you to be rich*. I desire to *emphasize that*. If you will use riches wisely, God wants you to be rich. It does not mean that you are to save nothing for your children. It means this only, that you are to save every cent from waste, and that you are to employ every cent in making increase and in use for your children and his children in the manner that will do the most possible good. Give nothing away foolishly or rashly. If you have large possessions, or in proportion to what you have, distribute freely, generously, nobly, when you see a real good as the probable outcome of the distribution.

You will see many good uses looking after you, and more yet if you are careful to look after them. Do not be discouraged because there are many unworthy objects suing for your charity—there are, also, many worthy ones. Do not wait for suitors for your benevolence. Hunt up the needy poor—the widows and orphans—whose cries go up into the ears of God. You might find some of them near at hand; some that you yourselves knew in sunnier days. Hunt them up, and do not grow weary over it. They are left with you that in blessing them you may bless yourselves also. Hunt up worthy young men. They need your counsels, and a small part of the surplus might increase your wealth by increasing their chances for happiness. You can make no better use of your wealth than by wisely bestowing a portion of it on the worthy poor. "There is that scatter-

eth and yet increaseth." The worthiest objects will be those you have yourself to seek. They will not come crouching, but, in lonely places, they wait for your coming, with hearts so sad! Go find them.

The great world is full of open doors: enter them. There is no need that you impoverish yourselves, and there is also no danger. "Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days." There is a wise way, and it is generous. Let your distribution be worthy of you. Do not call them gifts or charities. Let others, if they will, so call them. Do you, with a greater wisdom, call them the use of your Lord's goods, as he hath appointed. I seem in all this to be speaking only of, and to, the rich. I do not mean it. We all have something. Let us remember, that he is the noblest giver, not who gives much, but who gives most lovingly, in proportion to what he has. Cultivate love for generous deeds; it will broaden and deepen your manhood, it will give tone and richness to your piety, it will heighten and brighten your life, it will sweeten the experience and memories of the dying moment, and it will magnify the Lord in you to all eternity. Brothers, some day go alone in some sacred stillness, and with God in your thought and the whole reach of eternity in view think what is the highest and best ideal of a man—of a man's life of manly work—and resolve to realize that for yourself. Try! You will stand higher, and be more for ever and ever for the trying.

I have reserved to the last the most important advice of all, that it may be the last in your thought, namely, your duty to be earnest spiritual workers in the vineyard of the Lord. Many laymen are inclined to excuse themselves at this point. In my long pastorate I have noticed two very common faults here: One, in a disposition on the part of some to be over-

forward in what is called the spiritual work of the Church —by their very promptness excluding others. This becomes a serious fault when the over zealous brother is not exemplary in other respects, and especially when he leaves the financial burdens and responsibilities to others not more able to bear them than himself: a praying member when not a paying member, if able, is a grievous load to carry. The other, in a disposition on the part of some to shirk all spiritual duties, and content themselves with being paying members, but not of the working corps. These are both serious faults, which in many ways work harm to the body. It is possible to be too forward. Modesty is a cardinal virtue, and respect for the rights of others, even in matters of praying and speaking in meeting, is a commendable prudence. To bear the cross of silence is sometimes more useful than the recitation of unprofitable platitudes, or the utterance of verbose professions. To those who are addicted to taking a public part in every religious assembly, we suggest that what to them has become a habit, to others often has become a grievance. Occasional self-denial and cross-bearing might make their speech more golden. The suggestion will do to reflect about. But it was not of this fault that I designed to speak, but of the opposite one, the fault of habitually refraining from taking any part in the public services of the sanctuary; this, if not a greater fault than that above referred to, is certainly not less. If you were ready to do your part, your too-forward brother might learn the greatly needed lesson of modesty. His fault is partly due to you.

You prefer silence; you are not gifted; you would prefer to hear others; it would be a great cross for you to speak or lead in prayer; it would not be proper for you to talk in public, because you are so much mixed up with

the world, and because your religious experience is so obscure and unsatisfactory; these are the common excuses, sometimes of the very best people. Are they valid? Do they really excuse you? Do they not rather indicate a neglected line of duties. The modesty which restrains you would not fail to give grace to your words. Your want of fluency might impart depth and pathos to your prayers. Flurry and noise are not proofs of sincerity and earnestness. In any event, your soul needs and the Church deserves the benefit of your public confessions and supplications. If poor and humble, it puts you on a level with those who are more prosperous, and creates a common bond of sympathy profitable to both. In the house of God there are no distinctions. The poor and the rich meet together, and one God is father of them all. The words of the lowly, seasoned with grace, are often fullest of comfort. If rich and prosperous, and much esteemed and influential, the duty becomes doubly binding on you for the chastening of your own spirit, that it be not proud and elated and carried away with worldliness, and that your influence may be wholly given to the Church. You need it and your family needs it that you be not drifted away into the vain and empty blandishments of frivolity and fashion. Your wealth is your talent, and instead of exempting you from duties, adds gravity and weight to your responsibilities. God demands more, not less, of you. Do not make a mistake here. God wants and asks all your influence. Great piety with great wealth is, alas! very rare, but both possible and graceful. You who are favored with prosperity have special power of usefulness which you cannot guiltlessly sacrifice or neglect. Let your position in the Church be as conspicious as it is in the world, not simply in its financial support, but in all its spiritual

work. Be a working member in the public assemblies, and in the every-day walks of life.

A word on this latter point. The spiritual work of the Christian is not limited to the sanctuary — to the words spoken in the house of God, in exhortations and prayers. It has to do with your closet and with your family life. Keep the fires burning by the daily supply of fuel from the closet and family altar. Be priests in your homes. Wrestle with God for your children. Let grace appear in such loveliness in you that your children will be attracted by it. Let the sermon of your life and temper back up every exhortation of the pulpit. More than any body else be the evangel in your own household. Do not think it beneath you or unsuitable to you to be known to be zealous in religious matters. We do not mean to encourage cant or sanctimoniousness—both are detestable; but carry with you a wholesome, manly, and sturdy religiousness into all your business. Let there be no uncertainty as to where you stand. At suitable times talk frankly with your unprofessing friends. You, if your lives are noble, will have more influence with them than the most eloquent sermons. Study in all these things to be wise. There is no duty perhaps so difficult as to speak to our most intimate friends, but there is none so likely to be profitable when well timed. There are many among them wondering why you do not speak to them, even when they seem to be reluctant to hear. Especially if you are respected among the people who know you—if they look up to you with honor, it will be almost sure to win if you, when alone, speak gentle words of interest and affection. Young men especially will receive kindly advice when coming from your heart and lips. There are sons and daughters of your friends who have an open ear for your

counsel, and more especially the children of friends that are dead. Seek them out, and blessings will come to your own soul. Do not be ashamed to work for souls; carry them on your heart, and in the day of the Lord Jesus it will not be the minister alone who will have sheaves. Some will surprise you by relating in your ears the story of how your friendly words drew them—that word gently spoken, which at the time seemed to have done nothing. A loving word poured into the solitary ear is never lost.

And now, brothers, I bring these advices to a close, with the earnest desire that you will not forget them, and with prayers for you and your homes, that special benedictions may rest upon you. We can live but one life. No day once gone ever returns. Mistakes cannot be fully corrected. Neglects cannot be repaired. Opportunities once gone do not come back. A misdeed is a misdeed forever. In the light of these facts weigh the problems of life. Behold the great work set before you—the work of building once for eternity. See the results, rising and augmenting for ever and ever. Give heed. Gird you up like men. Be sublime. "Work . . . while it is day: the night cometh." The morning also cometh—the great and glorious morning, that is followed by a night never again—the harvest morning for all the days of toil. See to it, brothers, that you so sow that you shall come with rejoicing, bringing the sheaves. Only those things will abide which are planted and builded in God. If there is any thing which we shall look back to with pleasure from that beautiful home over there, it will be those things in which we were manliest, truest, bravest, down here. If there is any thing that will most sweeten the ever-unfoldings of the immortal years, it will be to find sharing in our rapture those who will never forget some

lonely moment made bright by our loving care. Nor will He forget—"he that sitteth on the throne." We work to-day not for to-day. Ye men of God, catch the inspiration of "your high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Take Him for your model who gave himself for you! He holds forth the crown, dare to take it.

You will be tempted to selfishness; you will feel the pull of the world at your affections; you will see the crowd drifting in the opposite direction; you will get weary sometimes; you will hear secret voices suggesting that there is an easier way; you will see others failing of duty, and leaving you to carry their burdens; and, after all, you will see some of your dearest hopes blasted: your children may not be a credit to you; those who receive your benefits may prove ungrateful; your motives may be impugned; adversities may come: but what of all this. There have been Jobs whose misfortunes have never been written. The truest and most faithful have more than once waded through the deepest waters, and the most unselfish and benevolent have not a few times been reduced to a crust. What, though having been faithful, yours should be such a case; what, though any or all of these sorrows should come to you, it will not prove that a life built in faith is a failure; it will not prove that dutifulness is not rewarded, or is ever unwise. The probabilities are, that even here most of the ends of right living will be secured, though they may all fail; but not one whose life is so built shall fail of his reward. Form the habit of measuring all things in the light of eternity, and of measuring their value by what God thinks of them. That will answer all questions. It is safe to follow where he points the way, and there is no safety where he has lifted signals of danger.

Brother ministers and laymen, in these addresses I have

mainly called your attention to your respective duties, and to motives to the faithful performance of them. May I now, in conclusion, add some words of warning? The interests you have been called to contemplate are not ordinary interests. You have seen and felt how great they are; how transcendentally sacred; how far-reaching; how they affect your dearest welfare for time; how they spread out over all eternity; how they concern humanity; how God himself is interested in them.

There are some points of danger to which your attention ought to be called. Interests do not prosper simply because they are great and deserve to prosper. The dangers often are in corresponding ratios with the interests involved. It is so here. Though God is himself the head of the Church, and though his heart is set on its welfare, and though all his power should be employed for its success, it is, nevertheless, beleaguered with many dangers. It is the purpose of its Founder that it shall take the world, but he has made its success depend on its fidelity to him. It is nothing without him, and he will dwell in it and work through it and for it only as it is faithful to him. It is an easy thing for the Church to lose its power. Of this the Greek Church, spread over wide regions, is an example to-day; likewise the Romish Church. It may be doubted whether they are not worse, or but little better, than absolute heathenism. There are other Churches which have degenerated to a scarcely less deplorable condition. As with the individual, so is it easy for the Church to miss the way. The descent to the inferno is sometimes rapid and noiseless, and the gulf is reached before the danger is apprehended. Signs of apparent prosperity are often but symptoms of real degeneracy; and when the Church is dizzy with joy over its assumed successes, its joy often is

but the wild frenzy of delirium which denotes approaching death. Much of the opposition to Christianity has its source here: it is not opposition to the real, so much as to the apostate and degenerate, Church which has made the name odious. The Church is detested because it has become detestable, and the hate is turned against Christianity, which it is assumed to represent, but of which it has, in fact, become only a sad travesty. The worst foe the Church has is often the Church itself. It becomes its own accuser and its own executioner. If dead, it is worthless; if perverted, its zeal becomes a consuming fire of mischief and hate, and all things beautiful and holy turn to rottenness and death under its manipulation. Its conservatism becomes the conservatism of priestly fables, and its aggressiveness the aggressiveness of worldly ambition and despotic power; it is thenceforth the enemy of progress and liberty, perverting truth, forging gyves for conscience, and enslaving souls and bodies with fetters of superstition and tithings. There is perpetual danger that the Church either become dead or perverted—animate with a life which is worse than death.

If we take warning from the past, we shall find admonitory signs of danger ominously hovering about our own Church at the present moment. The rocks which threaten us are not concealed; they lie in full view; they are right abreast of us; they stand out thick and threatening across the mouth of our second century. Will we rush madly, with all sails set, upon them? or will we have the wisdom to clear them, and magnificently sail down another century of glorious history? Is it not well that we look carefully about us, brothers, and take our reckoning?

We were once little. It is but yesterday that we passed over the brook with two bands. We have now become a

great host. None of the tribes of Israel spread more tents than we. Our camp-fires encompass the globe.

Our fathers lived in cabins in the wilderness and earned a scanty living by rude but honest industries. We dwell in ceiled houses and live in state on the large accumulations of wealth rapidly acquired. They were rude, but honest and hardy and self-denying, eschewing pride and pomp and the empty vanities of worldly pleasures and amusements and fashions, not ashamed of honest toil and humble fare; loving truth, and courageous in adversity and poverty: we have become refined and cultured, and luxury, ease, and elegance have become at once our bane and our necessity; the dull routine of daily toil with small returns has become a badge of abjectness, and we rush into the perilous ventures and excitements of commerce and speculation in stocks and merchandise; the theater and the opera-house, and expensive recreations, have become our pastime, and consume all our thoughts and moments not given to business; we are born and grow up and die in unhealthy competition and strifes; and all life is keyed on a false and discordant note: the rush of worldliness and mammon has set in, and threatens to sweep away and swallow up all the homely virtues that made our fathers noble. There is fever in the air. Contagion lies concealed in the customs of the times. The ethics of trade are corrupted and corrupting. Money outweighs character. Equipage and state are more prized than domestic virtue and honor. What is called society is fast becoming a painted harlot, whose breath is corrupt and deadly. Positions of honor and trust are bought and sold in the market. The old manly and womanly virtues have a price set on them. Gilded ignorance, veneered impiety, sham honor, pass more current than genuine merit. This is the

fashion of the times in which we live. Will the Church be able to stem this tide? Will she be able to hold her standards firm amid the hurtling? Will she be able to keep her children from being washed down by the current? That there are dangers none can deny. That they call for skillful piloting and robust and manly prowess none can question. The pulpit will need all its force, and the pew all its strength; the pulpit must be faithful to the pew, and the pew must be steadfast in its support of the pulpit, or our Church will go down the rapids and be swallowed by the gulf, as so many have done before, leaving but a worthless wreck behind.

"The Church of God is to day courting the world. Its members are trying to bring it down to the level of the ungodly. The ball, the theater, nude and lewd art, social luxuries, with all their loose moralities, are making inroads into the sacred inclosure of the Church, and as a satisfaction for all this worldliness, Christians are making a great deal of Lent and Easter and Good Friday and church ornamentation. It is the old trick of Satan. The Jewish Church struck on that rock, the Romish Church was wrecked on the same, and the Protestant Church is fast reaching the same doom."

Our great dangers, as we see them, are: assimilation to the world, neglect of the poor, substitution of the form for the fact of godliness, abandonment of discipline, a hireling ministry, an impure gospel, which, summed up, is a fashionable Church. That Methodism should be liable to such an outcome, and that there should be signs of it in a hundred years from the "sail-loft," seems almost the miracle of history; but who that looks about him to-day can fail to see the fact?

We have reached a point where two ways meet. It is with us to decide which of the two ways we will take. There are signs of indecision. If we accept the lure our history will soon be written, and it will be one of the saddest in Christian annals. Our economy is not framed on the idea of a time-serving and worldly Church. It will be an obstruction, and we shall not be able to compete with the social forces about us, and with other claimants to favor on that line. That which made us great, taken from us, will leave us poor and contemptible. Decay, once set in, will be rapid, and the boast of our enemies will be fulfilled—that "we are but a rush fire—an ephemeral excitement—a temporary wave of enthusiasm which, subsiding, leaves no monument." Over the doors of our great churches and institutions will be written "a spent force;" and the fragment that will survive will be "mockery and derision." Will we have it so? Isaac Taylor said that a moral wave measured eighty years—forty to reach its crest and break, and forty to subside and be lost. He allowed eighty years for the Methodistic phenomenon, when he predicted it would vanish and disappear. He made a mistake. Is it only the mistake of a few years?

The other way lies open to us. We have grown to our present status as a great religious force. We were born as a spiritual power. We were organized to spread scriptural holiness over the earth. Our mission was to the poor—to raise up the lowly; to care for the neglected; to preach a gospel of salvation from all sin—a free, present, full, conscious salvation; to build up a consecrated, unworldly, holy Church. It was not a crusade against wealth or culture or the highest social elevation, but it aimed at the subordination of all these to Christ. Thus the Church won its first

victories. Thus it was a power which overcame all oppositions and moved the age and the world. Thus it was that it proved one of the greatest moral forces since apostolic times, and built its temples of learning and religion in the four quarters of the globe. Thus it is that it has become recognized wherever Christianity is known as its highest expression—"Christianity in earnest."

Let it be true to its traditions and loyal to its ancient spirit and follow its old paths, and its glory will wax brighter and brighter in the coming century. It is for us to show how a people, animated simply by a religious spirit, can rise from the lowliest to the highest social condition without losing the simplicity of piety; to show how the greatest business energy and largest accumulations of wealth and most elaborate culture and best enjoyment of all things earthly can go hand in hand with the simplicity of a Christly character, and the deepest and truest expression of religion; to show how real godliness, the highest realization of Christian experience and life, can enjoy and sanctify all the best things the world has to give—its best refinement, its deepest and greatest learning, its purest taste, its noblest art. Every thing that is worthy and desirable in the estimation of good sense and virtue. It is for us to show that true Christianity imposes no restraints except such as ought to be imposed, and requires no service except such as works to the highest good of the individual and of universal society; that it makes the best characters, the best homes, the best nation, and, therefore, that it should be lived plain and simple, without compromise or accommodation; that there can be the truest piety without mopishness, seriousness without moroseness, the renunciation of improper pleasures without sadness, godliness with cheerfulness; that, in a word, a true churchly

life is the highest expression of the most exalted manhood. It is all summed up in the inspired phrase, "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." Phil. iv, 8. If we do these things we shall stand and be worthy to stand, but if we depart from them, "mene, mene, tekel upharsin" will be written against us, and the world will have no further need of us. Let us take warning by the fate of others, and hasten with all diligence to strengthen the threatened places; and may He whose the Church is, build us more and more in strength and beauty, and to his name shall be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

APPENDIX.

Note A.

No reformatory movement can be traced to its real original root. Were it possible to find the most primitive source of Methodism, possibly the mother of the Wesleys, rather than the sons, might claim the honor. Doubtless from her came the genius and much of the spiritual influences which appear so remarkably in Methodist history. Methodism was planted before the "Holy Club" was organized, or even initiated. The meetings, which became historic, and branded the participants with the title, "The Holy Club," commenced as early as 1736, possibly 1735; but long before that the seeds were planted which then commenced to take root in the hearts of the young Wesleys and their associates.

Note B.

I subjoin some tables, collated from the work of Dr. Dorchester, which ought to be found in every Christian library, and some from the Centenary volume, which all Methodists especially ought to own.

CHURCHES AND MINISTERS IN 1775.

DENOMINATIONS.	Churches.	Ministers.
Congregational	700	575
Episcopalian, Protestant	300	250
Baptist	380	350
Presbyterian	300	140
Lutheran	60	25
German Reformed	60	25
Dutch Reformed	60	25
Associate Reformed	20	13
Moravian	8	12
Methodist[1]	30	20
Total	1,918	1,435

[1] The Minutes for 1875 give 20 preachers to circuits, and 3,418 members. Each circuit comprised several societies, or Church organizations.

Churches, Ministers, and Communicants, 1880.

Evangelical Denominations.	Church Organizations or Congregations.[1]	Ministers.[2]	Members or Communicants.[3]
Baptist,[4] Regular, North[5]	6,782	5,280	608,556
" " South[5]	13,827	8,227	1,026,413
" " Colored[5]	5,451	3,089	661,358
Total	26,060	16,596	2,296,327
Baptist, Free-will[6]	1,432	1,213	78,012
" " Minor bodies[7]	.....	.....	25,000
" Anti-mission[4]	900	400	40,000
" Seventh-day[8]	94	110	8,539
" " German (estimated)	25	.....	3,000
" Six-Principle[4]	20	12	2,000
Total Baptist	[9] 28,531	18,331	2,452,878
Congregational (Orthodox)[10]	3,743	3,654	384,332
Disciple[11]	5,100	3,782	591,821
Dunker[12]	250	200	60,000
Episcopal, Protestant[13]	[14] 3,000	3,432	338,333
" Reformed[15]	....	100	9,448
Evangelical Association[16]	1,477	893	112,197
Friend, Evangelical (partly estimated)	392	200	60,000
Lutheran,[17] General Council	1,151	624	184,974
" General Synod, South	214	122	18,223
" " North	1,285	841	123,813
" Independent	913	369	69,353
" Synodical Conference	1,990	1,176	554,505
Total Lutheran	[18] 5,553	3,132	[19] 950,868
Methodist Episcopal[20]	.....	12,096	[21] 1,755,018
" " South[22]	.....	3,887	832,189
" " African[23]	.....	1,738	387,566
" " Zion[24]	.....	1,800	300,000
" " Colored[25]	.....	638	112,938
" Congregational[26]	.....	225	13,750
" Free[27]	.....	260	12,318
" Primitive[27]	.....	52	3,369
" Protestant[26]	.....	1,385	135,000
" Reformed (estimated)	.....	.....	3,000
" Union American[25]	.....	101	2,250
" Wesleyan in United States[28]	.....	400	17,087
Total Methodist	[29] 29,278	22,582	[21] 3,574,485
Mennonite (estimated)	300	350	50,000
Moravian[27]	84	94	9,491
Presbyterian, General Assembly[30]	5,489	5,044	578,671
" " South[30]	1,928	1,060	120,028
" United, of North America[30]	813	684	82,119
" Cumberland[30]	2,457	1,386	111,863
" Synod of Reformed[30]	117	111	10,473
" General Synod of Reformed[31]	50	32	6,800
" Welsh Calvinistic[32]	137	100	11,000
" Associate Synod of South[30]	112	121	6,686
" Other bodies (estimated)	.....	.....	10,000
Total Presbyterian	11,103	8,538	937,640

Evangelical Denominations.	Church Organizations or Congregations.[1]	Ministers.[2]	Members or Communicants.[3]
Reformed Church (late Dutch) [30]	510	544	80,208
" (late German) [33]	1,405	748	155,857
Second Advent [34]	800	600	70,000
" Seventh-day [30]	[35] 640	144	15,570
United Brethren [36]	4,524	2,196	157,835
Winnebrennarian, or Church of God [4]	400	350	30,000
German Evangelical Church Union, Bible Christians, Schwenkfelders, Bible Union, River Brethren, little known (estimated)	.....	.....	25,000
Aggregate	97,090	69,870	10,065,963

[1] In some cases the congregations are reported; in others only the organized Churches.

[2] Local preachers and licentiates not included.

[3] A few denominations reckon baptized children as members, but by far the smaller part.

[4] "Baptist Year-Book," for 1881.

[5] Divided on the basis of the two General Conventions, North and South, which are as separate as the Methodist and the Presbyterian Churches, North and South. The colored associations are also independent of the others.

[6] Free-will Baptist "Register," for 1881.

[7] Ibid., 1880.

[8] "Minutes of Seventh-day Baptist Convention," for 1880.

[9] Probably to some extent congregations.

[10] Official Statistics, furnished by Rev. A. H. Quint, D.D., 1881.

[11] Furnished by Rev. F. W. Green, Corresponding Secretary of the Missionary Society of the Disciples.

[12] Official returns for 1877.

[13] "Church Almanac for 1881." Another Almanac, a few more.

[14] Parishes.

[15] Statistics published after late Convention.

[16] "Almanac Evangelical Association," 1881.

[17] "Lutheran Church Almanac," 1881.

[18] Congregations.

[19] Including baptized children in some Synods.

[20] To December, 1880.

[21] Including ministers, because not reckoned elsewhere as communicants, and also probationers.

[22] "Almanac of Methodist Episcopal Church, South," for 1881.

[23] "Official Report," for 1880.

[24] Furnished by Rev. R. G. Dyson, a prominent minister of said Church.

[25] "Methodist Almanac," 1881.

[26] Furnished for 1880 by a leading minister.

[27] "Minutes," for 1880.

[28] Minutes of said Church for 1879.

[29] Church organizations of the Methodist Churches are not published in the "Minutes," and therefore cannot be accurately gathered. The "United States Census" reported 25,278 for all Methodist bodies in 1870. It is a moderate estimate to suppose that they have since increased 4,000. One branch of Methodism has increased its church edifices 3,700 since 1870.

[30] "Official Minutes," 1880.

[31] Furnished by Rev. David Steele, D.D., Philadelphia.

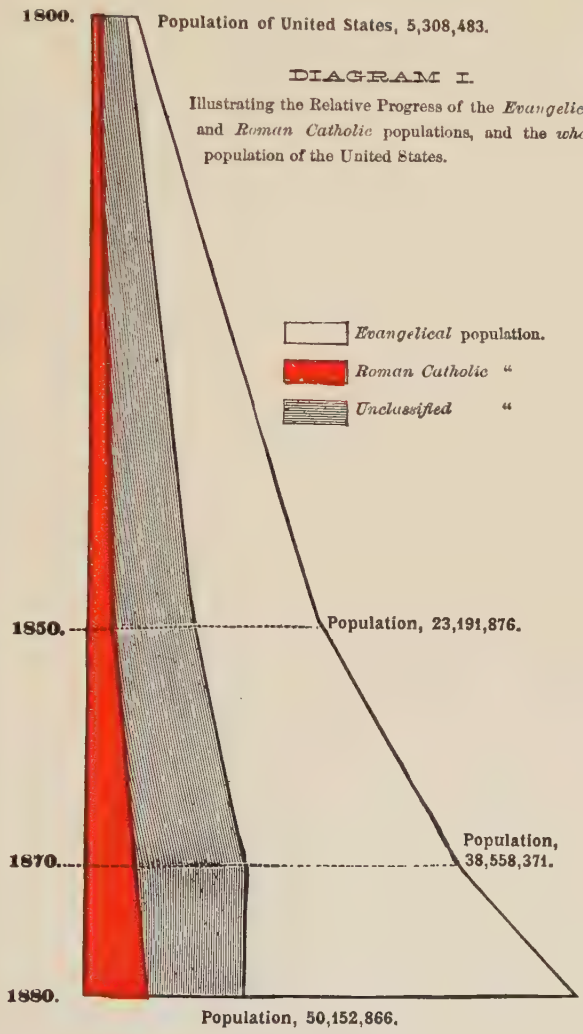
[32] Report of the Second Council of the Presbyterian Alliance, p. 963.

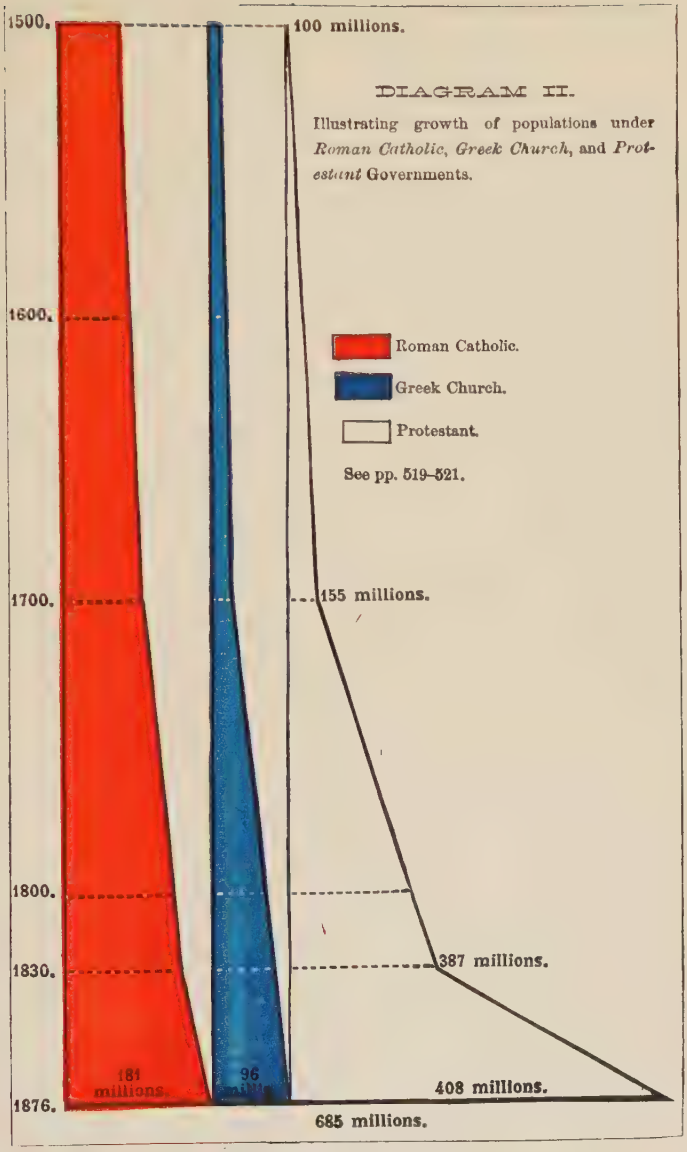
[33] "Almanac of Reformed Church," 1881.

[34] Estimated by leading Advent officials.

[35] Congregations.

[36] "Almanac of United Brethren," for 1881.


1800.
Population of United States, 5,308,483.
DIAGRAM I.
Illustrating the Relative Progress of the *Evangelical* and *Roman Catholic* populations, and the *whole* population of the United States.
Evangelical population.
Roman Catholic "
Unclassified "
1850.
Population, 23,191,876.
1870.
Population, 38,558,371.
1880.
Population, 50,152,866.


1500.
100 millions.
DIAGRAM II.
Illustrating growth of populations under *Roman Catholic*, *Greek Church*, and *Protestant* Governments.
1600.
Roman Catholic.
Greek Church.
Protestant.
See pp. 519–521.
1700.
155 millions.
1800.
1830.
387 millions.
181 millions.
96
408 millions.
1876.
685 millions.

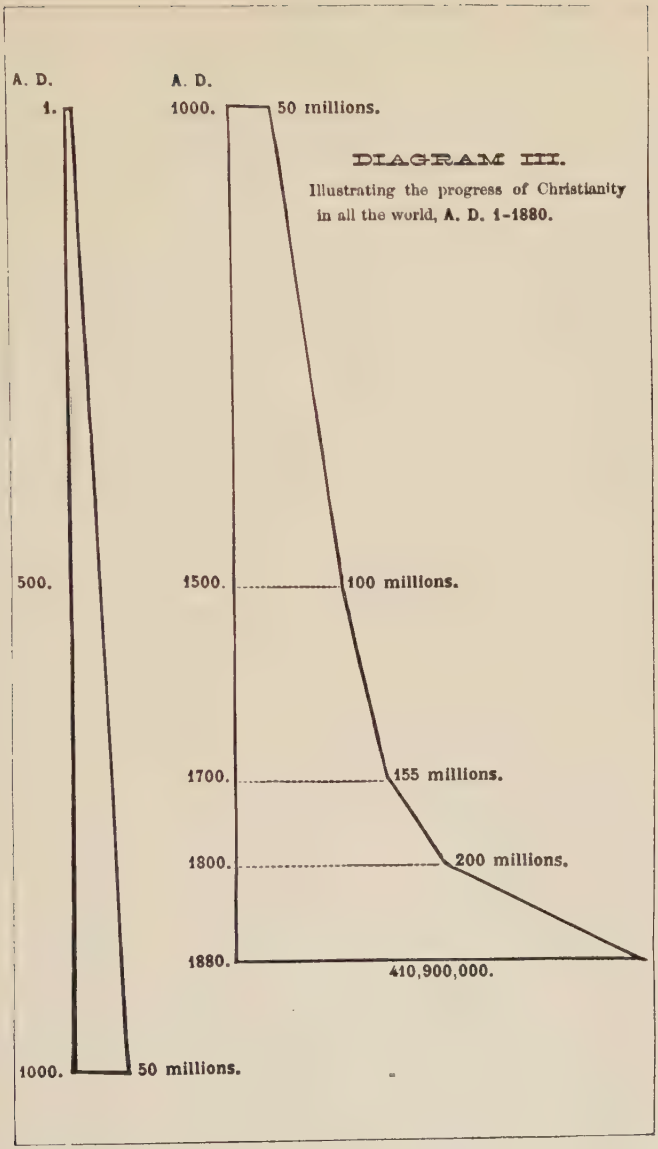


DIAGRAM III.

Illustrating the progress of Christianity in all the world, A. D. 1–1880.

General Summary of Methodists.

THE following summaries have been compiled from the latest official statistics reported by the several branches of the great Wesleyan Methodist family. Those of the Methodist Episcopal Church are to January 1, 1883, and include the official numerical returns of the Fall Conferences of 1882 and the Spring Conferences of 1883. Those of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, are for 1882. Those of the Canadian, British, and affiliating Conferences are for 1883. In two or three of the Churches the numbers of local preachers are "estimated;" but in each of those by distinguished members of large observation in the respective denominations.

	Itinerant Ministers.	Local Preachers.	Lay Members.
I. Episcopal Methodists in United States.			
Methodist Episcopal Church	12,654	12,337	1,790,593
Methodist Episcopal Church, South	4,045	5,869	877,299
African Methodist Episcopal Church*	1,832	9,760	391,044
African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church	2,000	2,750	300,000
Colored Methodist Episcopal Church*	1,046	683	155,000
Evangelical Association	953	599	119,758
United Brethren*	1,257	963	159,547
Union American Methodist Episcopal Church	112	40	3,500
Total Episcopal Methodists in United States	23,899	33,001	3,805,741
II. Non-Episcopal Methodists in United States.			
Methodist Protestant Church	1,358	1,010	123,054
American Wesleyan Church	267	215	23,590
Free Methodist Church	263	326	12,719
Primitive Methodist Church	27	162	3,716
Independent Methodist Church	25	27	5,000
Congregational Methodists	..	23	20,000
Total Non-Episcopal Methodists in United States	1,940	1,763	188,079
III. Methodists in Canada.			
The Methodist Church of Canada	1,216	1,261†	128,644
Methodist Episcopal Church of Canada	259	255	25,671
Primitive Methodist Church	89	246	8,090
Bible Christian Church	79	197	7,398
British Methodist Episcopal Church (Colored)	45	20	2,100
Total Methodists in Canada	1,688	1,979	171,903
IV. Methodists in Great Britain and Missions.			
British Wesleyan Methodists in Great Britain	1,917	14,183	441,484
" " " Missions	385	....	70,747
Primitive Methodists	1,147	15,982	196,480
New Connection Methodists	188	1,271	29,299
Wesleyan Reform Union	551	....	8,663
United Free Methodists	391	3,417	84,152
Bible Christians (including Australia)	228	1,909	28,624
Total Methodists in Great Britain and Missions	4,807	36,762	859,449
V. Wesleyan Affiliating Conferences.			
Irish Wesleyan Conference	239	....	25,050
French Wesleyan Conference	196	....	2,024
Australasian Conferences	449	4,480	69,392
South African	167	....	26,038
Total in Wesleyan Affiliating Conferences	1,051	4,480	126,504
Grand Total of Ministers and Lay Members.			
Methodists in Churches of United States	25,839	34,714	3,993,820
" Dominion of Canada	1,688	1,979	171,903
" Great Britain and Missions	4,807	36,762	859,449
" Affiliating Conferences	1,051	4,480	69,392
Grand total of Methodists and Missions in 1883	33,385	77,935	5,094,564

Note.—Total Methodist *population*, (estimated,) 25,472,370.

* The latest returns. † Exclusive of local preachers in New Brunswick Conference.

NUMERICAL GROWTH BY QUARTER CENTURIES.—Beginning with the close of 1784, the date of the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and reckoning by periods of twenty-five years, we have the following tabular exhibit:

	Year.	Itinerant Preachers.	Lay Members.	Increase in Preachers.	Increase in Members.
Total at Church organization, in.....	1784....	83	14,988	....	.....
Total at close of first quarter century, in	1809....	597	163,038	514	148,050
Total at close of second quar. century, in	1834....	2,265	638,784	1,668	475,746
Total at close of third quar. century, in	1859....	6,877	974,345	4,612	335,561
Total at close of 23 years, or in.....	1882....	12,365	1,742,021	5,488	767,676

During the third quarter century (namely, in 1845) the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was organized, and hence the apparent increase was not so great during that period.

LAY MEMBERSHIP BY DECADES.—The first Methodist Society (composed of — members) was formed in the autumn of 1766. The first decade closed with 1777. The numerical summaries for the several full decades since that period give the following figures:

YEAR.	TRAVELING PREACHERS.	INCREASE OF PREACHERS.	MEMBERS.	INCREASE OF MEMBERS.
1766	....	....	....	....
1776.....	24	24	4,921	4,921
1786.....	117	93	20,689	15,768
1796.....	293	176	56,664	35,975
1806.....	452	159	130,570	73,906
1816.....	695	243	214,235	83,665
1826.....	1,406	711	360,800	146,565
1836.....	2,928	1,522	650,103	289,303
1846.....	3,582	654	644,229	dec. 5,874
1856.....	5,877	2,295	870,327	156,098
1866.....	7,576	1,699	1,032,184	281,857
1876.....	11,361	3,785	1,613,560	581,376

During the decade 1836–1846 (in 1845) the separation of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, took place. That Church embraced in 1845, the date of its separate organization, a total of 462,428 members.

GROWTH OF LAY MEMBERSHIP COMPARED WITH POPULATION, instituting a comparison by taking the decades corresponding with those of the United States Census reports, we have the following table:

YEARS.	POPULATION.	INCREASE.	GAIN PER CENT. IN POPULATION.	GAIN PER CENT. IN CHURCH.
1790.....	3,929,214	.....	....	...
1800.....	5,308,483	1,379,269	35.10	12.60
1810.....	7,239,881	1,931,398	26.38	168.96
1820.....	9,633,822	2,393,941	33.06	48.87
1830.....	12,866,020	3,232,198	32.51	83.21
1840.....	17,069,453	4,203,433	33.52	68.38
1850.....	23,191,876	6,122,423	35.83	*....
1860.....	31,443,321	8,251,445	35.11	44.20
1870.....	38,558,371	7,115,050	22.65	37.47
1880.....	50,152,866	11,594,495	30.06	27.48

The progress of Christianity during the past one hundred years is one of the most palpable of all the phases of the world's history. The following table,† published as a conjectural, but probable, estimate of the progressive increase of the number of Christians in the world, in the successive centuries, intelligently made up from carefully collated

* The figures are omitted here because during the decade then closing the loss by separation of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, took place.

† See Ferussac, "Bull. Univ. Geog.," January, 1827, p. 4.

data, has been generally accepted. For the period more especially under consideration —the time since the birth of Protestantism—the following are the figures:

1500,* 100,000,000 Christians.	1700, 155,000,000 Christians.
1600, 125,000,000 "	1800, 200,000,000 "

Before 1847 Rev. Sharon Turner said:† "In this nineteenth century the real number of the Christian population of the world is nearer to three hundred millions, and is visibly much increasing from the missionary spirit and exertions which are now distinguishing the chief Protestant nations of the world."

The latest estimates are as follows:

Year.	Christians.	Authorities.
1830	228,000,000	Malté Brun.
1840	300,000,000	Rev. Sharon Turner, D.D.
1850	342,000,000	Rev. Robert Baird, D.D.
1876	394,000,000	Professor Schem, LL.D.
1880	410,900,000	Professor Schem, LL.D.

The above are probably the most reliable representations of the later progress of Christianity in the whole world, showing its wonderful growth in later years, far exceeding its previous progress In fifteen hundred years it gained one hundred millions; then, in three hundred years, it gained one hundred millions more; then, in seventy-nine years, it gained two hundred and ten millions more. In the last seventy-nine years it gained as much as in the eighteen centuries previous to 1800. During the nearly ten centuries of almost exclusive papal dominion Christianity gained only about eighty-five millions. Since the birth of Protestantism, a period about one third as long, it has gained nearly four times as much. And since the great religious quickening of Protestantism under the Wesleys and Whitefield, in the middle of the last century, it has gained two hundred and thirty-five millions.

But the portion of the earth's population under Christian governments has increased even more rapidly than the number of Christians, as will be seen by the following well-established figures:

UNDER CHRISTIAN GOVERNMENTS.

Year.	Population.	Authorities.
1500	100,000,000	Rev. Sharon Turner, D.D,
1700	155,000,000	Rev. Sharon Turner, D.D.
1830	387,788,000	Adrian Balbi.
1876	685,459,411	Prof. Schem, LL.D.

These figures show the wonderful growth of the Christian nations, the enlargement of their national domains, and the increase of their populations. They demonstrate the rapid extension of Christian influences and the Christian subjugation of the world. Nearly seven times the number of people are under the control of Christian nations as at the opening of the sixteenth century, when Protestantism arose. The increase in the one hundred and forty years since Wesleyanism arose in England has been five hundred millions, equal to more than one third of the population of the globe.

But has this wonderful increase been in the Greek, or the Roman Catholic, or the Protestant form of Christianity? Let us see. The following table, based upon statistics

* The statistics of the earlier periods are as follows:

	Christians.		Christians.
First century	500,000	Eighth century	30,000,000
Second "	2,000,000	Ninth "	40,000,000
Third "	5,000,000	Tenth "	50,000,000
Fourth "	10,000,000	Eleventh "	70,000,000
Fifth "	15,000,000	Twelfth "	80,000,000
Sixth "	20,000,000	Thirteenth "	75,000,000
Seventh "	25,000,000	Fourteenth "	80,000,000

See Mr. Turner's "History of the Anglo-Saxons."

† "History of the Anglo-Saxons," sixth edition, vol. iii, p. 484, note.

furnished in Seaman's "Progress of Nations," will show the relative strength of these forms of Christianity in the world in the year 1700:

Countries.	Pop'n under Roman Catholic Governments.	Pop'n under Greek Church Governments.	Pop'n under Protestant Governments.
Italy and islands	18,000,000	.....	.....
Spain and Portugal	13,500,000	.....	.....
France and colonies	20,700,000	.....	.....
Great Britain and colonies	.....	.....	9,000,000
Ireland	2,400,000	.....	.....
Holland and colonies	.....	.....	1,800,000
Belgium	1,400,000	.....	.....
Prussia	.....	.....	7,500,000
Denmark and colonies	.....	.....	1,300,000
Sweden and Norway	.....	.....	2,400,000
Germany	.....	.....	8,500,000
Switzerland	.....	.....	1,500,000
Austria and Hungary	18,000,000	.....	.....
Poland	3,000,000	.....	.....
Spanish and Portuguese America	13,000,000	.....	.....
Russia	.....	17,000,000	.....
Greece and isles	.....	12,000,000	.....
Africa, etc	.....	4,000,000	.....
Total	90,000,000	33,000,000	32,000,000

In the year 1500 about 80,000,000 of people were under Roman Catholic governments and not far from 20,000,000 under the Greek Church governments. The following estimates by Adrian Balbi, for 1830, and by Prof. Schem, for 1876, will serve our purpose:

	Pop'n under Roman Catholic Governments.	Pop'n under Greek Church Governments.	Pop'n under Protestant Governments.	Total.
1500	80,000,000	20,000,000	.....	100,000,000
1700	90,000,000	33,000,000	32,000,000	155,000,000
1830	134,164,000	60,000,000	193,624,000	387,788,000
1876	180,787,905	96,101,894	408,569,612	685,459,411

Note C.

The facility with which transfers are made from the pulpit of one Church to that of another, while on some accounts, perhaps, a thing to be commended, may, nevertheless, be matter of questionable desirableness, and indeed doubtful tendency. The path from one fold to another will certainly be too easy and broad when it makes no account of consistency—when, for personal convenience or money, a minister barters his convictions and gives the lie to all his former sacred professions. Churches that make little account of honesty or ministerial fidelity may hold out premiums to traitors, but their gains will be dearly acquired. Denominational comity is worth something. There have been and still will be cases where, without reproach, a minister will seek and find a home in another Church than that which he first joined, but the cases are few; and when changes are sought for other

than real reasons, they should be obstructed and discouraged. Methodism has neither respect nor premiums for changelings, whether they seek her pulpits or go from them. We commend the views of Dr. John Hall on this subject as timely and wise.

Note D.

The law of stewardship is one which ought to receive the careful and conscientious study of every one who aspires to be a consistent Christian. It deserves more than the passing notice which we are able to bestow upon it here. The hint will have accomplished much if it shall lead the reader to a prayerful and searching examination of its relations to his personal duty and to his deepest spiritual life. The use of goods, and of influence of every kind, like the use of faculty, not only indicates but also creates character. We have not meant in the preceding statement to be understood that the law of benevolence for others should stand in abeyance until all of our imaginary or even real personal wants are fully supplied, but rather that other claims cannot take precedence. It might be a duty to divide a crust in conceivable emergencies, and it is a constant law that we should go beyond ourselves in our sympathies and devisings, helping others when possible, without absolute neglect of personal needs. When personal needs are supplied, the residue of our possessions becomes a sacred trust. The divine law requires that we should husband it carefully and employ it to our best ability for the promotion of all such ends as we believe will be for the glory of God, for the good of man, and for those only. Let it not be supposed that in this statement we mean to imply that until personal wants are supplied there are no duties to others. We are indicating one branch of duties, namely, the use of property. The duty of benevolent feeling and disposition to do good, and the actual and constant purpose to do good in every possible way, begins with our moral consciousness and terminates never.

Note E.

One of the saddest things we meet, as we journey through the world, is a home where there are no signs of love. We cannot doubt that often love exists when there are no external signs, but the absence of its manifestation is at the same time a calamity and a sin. It is the duty not only for the husband to love the wife, and the parent the child, but also to habitually give such proof of it as will make the home cheerful and happy. The wife, who was wooed with tenderness, has a right not to be treated with either neglect or harshness. The child has a right not simply to protection and care, but to parental affection, and the daily expression of it in word and act. It is well for the home where the husband and wife keep up the courtship days till the grave separates them, and where the sons and daughters receive the good-night kiss and the morning blessing. There is a charm in delicate attentions, which gilds the rough every-day intercourse and employments of life with a heavenly sheen. One sweet word lightens a load of care. A single tender look often dissipates a cloud of sorrow, and turns a dark day into a bright one. Try it, Christian husbands and fathers. Keep up the love-days; talk together of the halcyon hours when you started on the journey of life together—when you took the young bride from the shelter of a loving home. You do not love her less now with her gray hairs and furrowed cheek. Tell her so, often as the evening shades gather around her declining years. Let the children see that old age is neither cheerless nor loveless. Do not let the time come when your daughters grow too old for loving caresses, or your sons withhold the freedom of a perfect and trusting confidence. Keep sunshine in the home.

Pleasant words and loving acts fill the home with sweet fragrance. They cost nothing, but millions of dollars cannot buy what they supply, nor can all that wealth furnishes make home sweet without them. No study pays better than the daily study of the art of being agreeable to those who sit with us at the table and share our beds. "Practice makes perfect." Practice the art daily, and it will become natural as the heart beats, and the home will be as the garden of the Lord, filled with music and fragrance all the day.

There are homes where no word of praise is ever spoken. The good

wife toils away at her monotonous drudgery, but her husband, though perhaps inwardly acknowledging her efficiency, never thinks to say he does so, or to express a wish that her burden should be lightened. The children are reproved and rebuked for every fault, the rod also being introduced when it seems necessary, but they have no word of praise for what they have done obediently and properly. Their right doing is taken as a matter of course; their wrong doing is treated as a matter of discipline. It is no wonder if such homes have clouds come over them, or if in the hearts of all the inmates the sadness lodges that shows itself in their faces and behavior.

Christian parents, think on these things. The ideal home is the topmost realization of Christ's kingdom on earth, its brightest flower, its ripest, richest fruit—the very consummation of our Lord's prayer for his Church: "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it; that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them." John xvii, 21–26.

Blessed consummation! one forever in and with the Lord. Make home sweet. Let no bruises or scars be carried from its holy precincts. Let not the grave which shrines our dead reproach us for unkindness when they were at home with us. Let there be no words we should wish unspoken when the ears are sealed that should hear them. Speak gentle words, do loving deeds now, and the grave will send them back, and eternity will echo them forever. Do not forget to make home lovely with that radiance which beautifies all beauty—the radiance of love.

Note F.

With a view to give permanence to a catholic and discriminating testimony, and to wise and brotherly suggestions from an eminent divine of a sister communion, I insert here words on our Centennial by the Rev. W. J. R. Taylor, of the Reformed (Dutch) Church, published in "The Christian Advocate" of June 19, 1884:

"The most attractive point in the centennial review of American Methodism is its phenomenal origin, growth, and establishment. 'What hath God wrought!' 'Who hath despised the day of small things?' 'The little one' has become millions! Its history is a modern reproduction of the parable of the mustard-seed and of the leaven. It is 'a sign and a wonder,' if not a miracle, among the increasing works of Christ in the world. Its providential and spiritual character is as distinct and strong as that of any other great religious reformation in Christendom. Its nickname has become a name of honor, and 'The Pious Club' of Oxford has risen to power among the nations since Whitefield, Wesley, and their fellows took to the fields for room 'to preach the Gospel to the poor,' and Thomas Coke was 'chimed out' of his own church at Petherton to become the 'foreign minister of Methodism' and its first Bishop in the United States, and to find his grave in the Indian Ocean. Contrasting these small beginnings with the statistical representations of the first Centenary of Methodism throughout the world, its history is tremulous with profoundest interest, and challenges the most candid consideration of thoughtful people in all other Christian communions.

What, then, has Methodism Done?

"'The tree is known by its fruit.' Beginning as a personal reaction in a few choice spirits against the prevailing formalism and defection in doctrine, practice, and experience in the Church of England, and against the ungodliness of that skeptical period, the revolt soon became a revolution, which, like primitive Christianity, first fixed itself among the common people, and spread from city to city, and from county to county, and then crossed the Atlantic, and reproduced in America what it had done in England and Wales.

The revolution became a reformation, extending beyond its own

immediate fellowship of believers, preachers, and churches into other communions which were leavened by its fermenting Gospel spirit, although at first, and long after, they seemed to be almost as antagonistic as the Jews and Samaritans.

"At the end of its first century of organized ecclesiastical life Methodism in the United States finds itself nearer than ever before to all other Christian evangelical denominations in the bonds of the common faith, and for the great objects of the kingdom of God.

"For the progress and success of this vast religious movement, and for its commanding importance as a branch of the Church universal, the following reasons are self-evident to the student of its work:

"1. Its undiminished, original, and all-pervading evangelistic spirit. It preaches the good tidings of great joy to all people, and especially to the poor. It is pre-eminently a preaching Church, after the example of the Great Teacher and of his apostles and evangelists, and the persecuted disciples who 'went every-where preaching the word.' More than any other Church of the Reformation, Methodism has multiplied its preachers, clerical and lay alike; and its witnesses, both male and female, have never ceased their testimonies for Christ and his Gospel.

"2. Its system of Church fellowship, its class-meetings, love-feasts, and other social assemblies, have been powerful adjuncts of its preaching forces. Its brotherhoods and sisterhoods have made strong family ties, which, like 'a three-fold cord,' are 'not easily broken.'

"3. Methodism has been far less conventional in its habits, and less rigid in its ecclesiastical movements, than other and older Protestant bodies. The strictness of its 'General Rules' of Christian life and Church fellowship and order, are in perfect harmony with the free spirit which has prevailed in its Sabbath and social worship, its class-meetings, camp-meetings, and revivals. Whatever errors of excess and defect have attended these services, they have kept their hold upon the masses of the people whom they at first attracted, and they are capable of indefinite modification for improvement and expansion.

"4. The itinerancy has been the right arm of Methodism the world over. No other denomination of Christians in this country has so few vacant pulpits, and none has such facilities for putting the right man in the right place at the right time. Modify it in whatever way it may

be wisest and best, the system is an integral part of its history and life. The prescience of John Wesley was never more pronounced than in his memorable dictum, that 'the day when the itinerancy should cease among the ministry and the classes among the laity of Methodism would be the day of its downfall.' Other Churches, whose ministries have become itinerant in fact, without the order and fitness of that of the Methodist Church, might be greatly benefited by some adaptation of its effective system for supplying every church with a suitable preacher.

"5. Methodism owes its spread and power largely to its general superintendency by the Bishops, to whose wisdom, zeal, and power the conduct of its immense concerns has been confided with pre-eminent success. Personal acquaintance with some of these apostolic men who have gone to their reward, and with others still living, has filled the writer with profound regard for their consummate executive ability, their far-reaching views, their tact and sanctified common-sense, and, above all, their pious consecration to the work in which they 'gladly spend and are spent' for Christ's sake. With such leaders the work of their Church cannot stand still.

"6. The connectional objects of the Methodist system of religious and benevolent agencies have greatly developed and enlarged its power for good. Ranging between the Sunday-schools and theological seminaries, and from the Tract Society and the great publishing houses and the smallest home mission to the foreign work which encircles the globe, connecting every church, district, and local conference with the various boards and societies and the General Conference, these beneficent agencies constantly call forth the graces, gifts, and services of all the congregations. John Wesley's three principles—'Justification, sanctification, and a penny a week,' ought not to lose their significance in the effort to raise the ten or twelve millions of dollars to be laid on the centennial altar of thanksgiving. It is a good sign that education heads the list of the objects for which the call is made by the centenary committees of the Churches, North and South. It marks the drift of thought and the fundamental relations of a liberal, thorough, and large educational system to the progress and prosperity of the entire Church. The educational work of Methodism, past, present, and prospective, is not the least of its great achievements.

"7. The practicalness of Methodism is another source of its working power. With its thoroughly organized polity, and its faculty of adaptation to its environments, it has been true to itself. Aggressive and adventurous, courageous and consecrated, popular and progressive, 'working out its own salvation with fear and trembling,' 'giving diligence to make its calling and election sure,' believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, and invoking the Holy Ghost, it has continued hitherto. Holding its old ground, and making headway against great obstacles, it has overcome hosts of prejudices, and now outnumbers every other evangelical communion. All this is due largely to the intense, flexible, and fertile practicalness of the body and its members, which probably originated in the emergencies of its earliest years, and has been stimulated and developed by its pioneer service.

"After this imperfect review of some of the best traits of Methodism, and in the line of the editorial suggestion that 'unqualified commendation will not be expected,' a friendly hand may be permitted to touch lightly upon a few signs of weakness and disease which its own physicians have yet to heal.

"1. There seems to us who are looking on to be a chronic and undue dependence upon emotional excitement, sympathetic impulses, and factitious methods of public and social worship, especially in seasons of revivals, which are followed soon or later by coldness, stolidity, and collapse. Similar results may attend the most successful and lasting religious revivals, which have been characterized by the utmost wisdom and care. That they have been more conspicuous in the history of Methodism may be due partly to the greater number of these periodical movements, but chiefly to the manner in which they have been generally conducted.

"2. The proof of this opinion is in the astonishing disproportion between the number of probationers and those of them who afterward become full communicants in Methodist churches. One of the most experienced presiding elders in the Newark Conference at its last session reported over three thousand additions on probation to the churches in his district during his term of service, and no actual increase in the aggregate membership in full communion within the four years. He accounted for it to several patent causes, such as deaths and removals, but more than all to the great amount of 'dead

wood' in the churches. After reading statistics and discussions on this subject in Methodist papers and at preachers' meetings, the questions have arisen, Is this grievous fact inherent in the Methodist system? Is there any organic reason for it? Can it be cured? No Church is absolutely pure, but a Church that gathers such multitudes into its fold, and that suffers as much as the Methodist Church does by the loss of probationers, ought to be able to limit, if it cannot stop, this source of defection. Might not the probationary system be strengthened, and this evil be shorn of much of its badness, by taking the candidates under the watch and care of the Church, but not admitting to the Lord's Supper until they shall enter into full communion?

"3. Why does not the Methodist Church keep pace with the increase of population, and with some other denominations in our large cities? The facts are admitted in its own journals, and they perplex its leaders. Have costly and splendid church edifices, fine music, and other concomitants of popular city churches any thing to do with it? Is Methodism losing its old-fashioned daring and power, its humility and success, amid the whirl of the city, the worldliness and luxury and the pride of life that have palsied so many other Churches? If this serious problem in the work of Methodism can be successfully solved by its wisdom, zeal, and love, all other Churches of sister communions will be its debtors.

"Why, again, does Methodism fail to keep its own children and youth within its pale? Dr. Abel Stevens, in his 'Centenary of Methodism,' says the statistics prove that 'most of its converted youth fail to enter, or are lost to, its communion.' It is a hopeful sign that this problem is also attracting the official attention which it deserves. But, after all, are not the true remedies to be found in the homes of an instructed people, and in the fidelity of pastors, Sunday-school teachers, and other Christian workers in the separate churches? The propagation of the truth as it is in Jesus, and the training of children, are the main divinely ordered sources of the strength and progress of the Church of Christ.

"Against these and other weaknesses and faults, some of which are constitutional and some are shared with all Christian Churches, Methodism has a remarkable degree of recuperative energy. Its very diffi-

culties are signs of vitality and growth. Its strength is in God; its weakness is in itself. Its possibilities are in proportion to its numbers and resources, its opportunities, and its hidden reserves of spiritual power and grace. What may not this great, grand, energetic, powerful Church do for Christ and mankind in the next hundred years?

"One other suggestion which comes out of this review has grown upon me with increasing force.

"Now, at the beginning of its second century, Methodism has attained an irenic position, which may be one of the most potent factors of its future. The old controversial habit has lost its virus. Its ministers and members pass readily, and in great numbers, into other pulpits and pews. Shoulder to shoulder its preachers and leaders stand up together against the common foe. In foreign lands its missionaries are leagued with those of other Churches, sinking minor differences in the unity of the common faith and in the work of evangelizing the nations. If Calvinism and Arminianism are philosophically and theologically opposed, they are essentially one in the fundamental doctrines of salvation by the vicarious sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the necessity and power of the Holy Spirit in the work of grace. Despite theoretical differences, Calvinists and Arminians cannot resist the divine agencies and the supreme motives which are forcing them, by common impulses, to the front in the great conflicts of these latter days which are to bring on the millennium. The entire Church of God is in transition to a period of unity, service, and power, which will oblige Christians to stop fighting each other, and to help each other in the struggles with the powers of darkness.

"With these prospects, and in this spirit, the apostolic congratulations spring from the heart to the pen in closing, 'All them that are with me salute thee. Greet them that love us in the faith. Grace be with you all.' Amen."

Note G.

THE OXFORD LEAGUE.

The Oxford League is a new proposal in connection with the Centenary of our Church. It is designed to promote, especially among our most intelligent young Church people, the careful study of Meth-

odism; to discover the harmony between it and the doctrines, spirit, and methods of the Apostolic Church, and also to trace the development of the Methodistic force in the Holy Catholic Church from the days of the apostles to the present time.

The Oxford League will associate modern Methodism with the Oxford students, who, gathering week after week about the open Greek Testament, studied the word in the original, that they might more thoroughly enter into its divine thought and spirit. Methodism began among the scholars. It reached from the rectory of Epworth, from the halls of Christ College, and the parlors of Lady Huntingdon down to the lowest stratum of English society. Its work has been a work among the masses, and too often our young people have connected the idea of the Methodistic movement with this department of its activity. It is the design of the Oxford League to correct such limited views; to promote an appreciation of the scholarship, strength, and dignity of the early Methodist movement; to make our young people familiar with the profound philosophy underlying Methodist theology, and the wisdom of its practical methods; to create a greater love for the study of the Bible in order to spiritual experience; to connect such study and experience with practical work for others; to correct the false notion that, because our Church opposes certain so-called social amusements, she is opposed to legitimate and healthful recreation; to correct the equally false and injurious idea that Methodism is adapted only to the lower classes of society, and not equally adapted to the most cultivated and refined; to promote literary and scientific training under the auspices of the Church itself, through such organizations as the Church Lyceum; and to develop a rational and refined parlor life in which the most accomplished people may find inspiration, and people of limited opportunities be brought into gentle, ennobling, and sanctifying social fellowships.

All these ends will be furthered through the occasional publication of permanent documents devoted to the history, philosophy, doctrines, institutions, and achievements of Methodism, especially through the Methodist Episcopal Church.

THE END.

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